



FACULTAD DE TEOLOGÍA

INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO DE ESPIRITUALIDAD

**The Interpretations of the
Ignatian Examen in History:
Between Morality and Spirituality**

Autor: Somy Mathew Mannoor, SJ

Director: Dr. Pascual Cebollada Silvestre, SJ

Madrid, marzo 2018



FACULTAD DE TEOLOGÍA

INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO DE ESPIRITUALIDAD

**The Interpretations of the Ignatian Examen in History:
Between Morality and Spirituality**

Visto Bueno del Director

Fdo. Prof. Dr. Pascual Cebollada Silvestre, SJ

Madrid, marzo 2018



cf. Ignatius of Loyola, *Exercitia spiritualia S.P. Ignatii Loyolae, fundatoris Societ. Jesu*, Prague: Typis Universitatis Carolo-Ferdinandae in Collegio Societatis Jesu ad S. Clementem, 1680, n. 43

Dedicated to St. Joseph,

the man of great silence and the patron of mystics

*and in gratitude to Chachi, my mother:
the first to teach me the lessons in morality and spirituality,
and who continues to inspire me with her life.*

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	i
Abbreviations	xv
General Introduction	1
Chapter 1	9
Conscience, Confession and the Interplay of Spirituality and Morality	9
1 Introduction.....	9
2 The Identity of Spirituality and Morality	10
2.1 Etymology of the Term Spirituality	12
2.2 The Term Spirituality Through History	14
2.3 Use of Other Terms Over the Centuries.....	20
2.4 Present Day Uses of the Term Spirituality.....	23
2.4.1 Fundamental Human Dimension	23
2.4.2 Spirituality as Lived Experience	24
2.4.3 Spirituality as Academic Discipline.....	25
2.5 The General Notion of Morality.....	26
2.5.1 Moral Theology: Historical Beginnings.....	26
3 Morality and Spirituality: Separated Siblings	30
3.1 Unity in Diversity.....	32

3.1.1	Autonomy of Each Discipline	33
3.1.2	Theology as the Common Ground for Spirituality and Morality.....	35
3.1.3	Trintiy as the Source	39
3.1.4	Christological and Pneumatological Roots	41
3.2	The Morality-Spirituality Confluence.....	42
3.2.1	Fruits of Convergence in Spirituality.....	44
3.3	Observations.....	47
4	Conscience, Consciousness and Discernment.....	49
4.1	Conscience	49
4.2	Consciousness	56
4.3	Discernment	60
5	The Practice of Confession in the Church.....	63
5.1	Historical Developments	63
5.2	Complete Confession	72
5.3	Confession to Laity	73
6	Ignatius' Experience of Confession.....	77
6.1	Confession to Comrades.....	78
6.2	Ignatius at Montserrat: Confession to Priest	79
6.3	The Confession of Ignatius and its Role in Conscience and Morality.....	83
7	Conclusion	87

Chapter 2	89
The Daily Examen for Ignatius and	89
Some of His Companions	89
1 Introduction.....	89
2 The Examen in Ignatian Writings.....	91
2.1 Letters of Ignatius and the Examen.....	94
2.1.1 Letter 1899, to Joanni Pelletario	95
2.1.2 Letter 5174, to Ponce Cogordan	96
2.1.3 Letter 3, To Francisco de Borja.....	96
2.1.4 Letter 123, to Those in Trent.....	98
2.1.5 Letter 1854, to Antonio Brandano	99
2.1.6 Letter 24, to Those in Mission (<i>sociis ad laborandum missis</i>) ..	100
2.1.7 Letter 4012, to Gaspari Barzaeo.....	101
2.1.8 Letter 182, to College of Gandía.....	102
2.1.9 Letter 295, to Andrés Oviedo.....	102
2.1.10 Letter 1566, to Andrés Oviedo.....	105
2.1.11 Letter 3002, to Diego Laínez	105
2.1.12 Letter 6502, to John Baptist	106
2.1.13 Letter 1225,1, to Michael Ochoa.....	107
2.2 Observations.....	107
3 Peter Faber and the Examen: Story of a Lifetime	108
4 Francisco Javier and the Examen	111
4.1 Living the Christian Faith	112

4.2	Instruction for a Novice.....	114
4.3	Instructions for Formed Jesuits	115
4.4	Observations.....	117
5	Claude Jay, Alfonso Salmerón and the Examen	117
5.1	Claude Jay	117
5.2	Alfonso Salmerón.....	119
6	Jerónimo Nadal	120
6.1	The <i>Epistolae de Nadal</i> and the Examen	121
6.2	<i>Pláticas espirituales</i> de Nadal and the Examen	124
6.3	Observations.....	129
7	Juan Alfonso de Polanco	129
7.1	The <i>Chronicon</i> and the Examen.....	130
7.1.1	Pastoral.....	131
7.1.2	In Religious Life	137
7.2	Observations.....	140
8	Francisco de Borja	141
8.1	The <i>Tratados espirituales</i> and the Examen.....	142
8.1.1	To Know Oneself	143
8.1.2	Examine the Entire Day – Changing the Old Man	144
8.2	The <i>Spiritual Diary</i> and the Examen.....	147
8.2.1	The Daily Examen to be Pure in Conscience.....	149
8.2.2	Scruples and the Examen	150

8.3	Observations.....	151
9	Conclusion	152
	Chapter 3	155
	The Examen in the Second-Generation Jesuits.....	155
1	Introduction.....	155
2	Antonio Cordeses and Perfection in Life	156
2.1	The Examen in the <i>Tratado de las tres vidas</i>	157
2.2	Mental Prayer and the Examen	159
2.2.1	Oración intelectualiva	161
2.2.2	Oración afectiva.....	162
2.3	The <i>Vía purgativa</i> and the Examen.....	163
2.4	Observations.....	164
3	Gil González Dávila and the <i>Pláticas</i>	165
3.1	<i>Las Pláticas</i> and the Examen	166
3.1.1	The Daily Examen.....	167
3.1.2	The Particular Examen.....	174
3.2	Observations.....	178
4	Peter Canisius and the <i>Catechism</i>.....	179
4.1	The Examen in the Autobiography and Other Personal Writings.....	180
4.1.1	In His Vocation	180
4.1.2	Growth and Perfection in Prayer.....	185
4.1.3	The Particular Examen and Perfection.....	189

4.2	<i>The Catechism</i> and the Examen	191
4.3	Observations.....	195
5	Alonso Rodríguez and the Practice of Perfection	195
5.1	Perfection in Christian Virtue and the Examen.....	196
5.1.1	Role of the Examination of Conscience.....	197
5.1.2	The General Examination of Conscience.....	199
5.1.3	The Particular Examination of Conscience.....	202
5.2	Observations.....	206
6	Francisco Suárez	206
6.1	<i>De religione Societatis Iesu</i> and the Examen.....	207
6.2	Observations.....	211
7	Achille Gagliardi	212
7.1	Gagliardi's Ignatian Principles and the Examen	213
7.1.1	The Daily Exercise	215
7.2	Observations.....	217
8	Luis de la Palma and the <i>Camino espiritual</i>.....	218
8.1	Luis de la Palma and the Daily Examen	219
8.2	The Examen in <i>Práctica y breve declaración del camino espiritual</i>	219
8.3	The Examen and <i>Tratado del examen de la conciencia</i>	222
8.3.1	The Steps of the Daily Examen.....	223
8.3.2	Material for the Examen and Complexity of Thoughts	230
8.3.3	The Fruits of the Examen.....	234

8.4	Luis de la Palma and the Particular Examen.....	236
8.4.1	Factors in the Particular Examen	237
8.4.2	The Form of the Particular Examen.....	238
8.4.3	The Subject Matter.....	241
8.5	Observations.....	244
9	Luis de la Puente	245
9.1	The Examen in the <i>Meditaciones</i>	245
9.1.1	The Daily Examination of Conscience	246
9.1.2	Purification of the Soul	248
9.1.3	The Five Steps.....	251
9.2	The Examen in Relation to Self-Knowledge.....	256
9.3	The Particular Examen	258
9.4	Observations.....	261
10	Conclusion	262
	Chapter 4	265
	The Examen in the Century of Spirituality	265
1	Introduction.....	265
2	Louis Lallemant	267
2.1	The Examen in the <i>Doctrine spirituelle</i>	268
2.2	Observations.....	276
3	Jean-Joseph Surin.....	277
3.1	The Daily Examen in the Teachings of Surin	278

3.1.1	The Three Categories of People	278
3.1.2	Away from Attachments	280
3.1.3	Differentiating the Movements	284
3.2	The Particular Examen	287
3.3	Observations.....	288
4	Jean Pierre de Caussade.....	288
4.1	Abandonment and the Examen	290
4.1.1	The Examen and Confession.....	290
4.1.2	Resisting Temptations of Self-Love	293
4.1.3	Purity of Conscience and Abandonment.....	298
4.2	Observations.....	304
8	Jean Crasset.....	306
8.1	The Examen in Crasset’s Writings.....	307
8.1.1	Towards Repentance	308
8.1.2	Uncovering Inordinate Attachments	309
8.1.3	Finding Out the Causes	311
8.1.4	Verifying the Behaviour.....	312
8.2	Observations.....	314
9	Giovanni Battista Scaramelli	315
9.1	The Examen in the <i>Direttorio</i>	317
9.1.1	The Daily Examination of Conscience	318
9.1.2	The Particular Examen.....	328
9.2	Observations.....	331

10 Conclusion	332
Chapter 5	335
The Examen in the Documents of.....	335
the Society of Jesus.....	335
1 Introduction.....	335
2 Rules of the Society of Jesus (<i>Regulae Societatis Iesu</i>).....	336
2.1 Doc. 23: <i>Regula Generalis</i> (1541)	337
2.2 Doc. 24: <i>Examen Generale Conscientiae</i> (ca. 1541)	337
2.3 Doc. 27: <i>Regulae His qui Extra Studia Iuvandis Proximis Versantur</i> ...	338
2.4 Doc. 43: <i>Scholasticis Externis Servandos</i> (ca. 1548).....	339
2.5 Doc. 45: <i>Regulae Ministri</i> (1548)	339
2.6 Doc. 51: <i>Regulae Visitatoris Nocturni</i> (1549)	340
2.7 Doc. 62: <i>Constitutionis Collegiorum</i> (1549-1550)	340
2.8 Doc. 63: <i>Regulae Collegi Romani</i> (1551)	341
2.9 Doc. 67: <i>Regulae Communes</i> (1551).....	342
2.10 Doc. 69: <i>Regulae Collegii Germanici</i> (1552)	342
2.11 Doc 71: <i>Summarium Constitutionum</i> (1553-1554)	342
2.12 Doc. 74: <i>Officium Ministri</i> (1553-1554)	343
2.13 Doc. 77: <i>De magistro noviciorum</i> (1553-1554).....	343
2.14 Doc. 97: <i>Orationis Ordo</i> (1553-1554)	344
2.15 Doc. 98 A, B, C: <i>Regulae Scholarum Externarum</i> (1554).....	345

2.16	Doc. 107: <i>Sti. Ignatii Ordinationes Varie</i> (ca. 1555).....	345
2.17	Observations.....	345
3	The <i>Ratio Studiorum</i> and the Examen.....	346
4	The <i>Directorios</i> and the Examen.....	350
4.1	The <i>Ejercicios leves</i>	352
4.2	The Order of Giving	354
4.3	The Examen and Confession.....	356
4.4	Discernment and the Examen.....	358
4.5	The Particular Examen	358
4.6	Observations.....	362
5	The <i>Epitome</i>	363
6	The Examen in the General Congregations.....	366
6.1	The First General Congregation	366
6.2	The Second General Congregation	369
6.3	The Third General Congregation	372
6.4	Claudio Aquaviva and the Three GCs.....	374
6.4.1	The Three General Congregations and the Examen	375
6.5	Spiritual Renewal and the Seventh General Congregation	377
6.6	Other General Congregations.....	378
6.7	General Congregation 27	379
6.8	The Thirtieth General Congregation	380

6.9	The Examen in the General Congregations Thirty-One to Thirty-Six...	382
6.9.1	Thirty-First General Congregation.....	383
6.9.2	The Thirty-Second General Congregation.....	385
6.9.3	Thirty-Third General Congregation.....	388
6.9.4	Thirty-Fourth General Congregation.....	390
6.9.5	Thirty-Fifth General Congregation.....	393
6.9.6	Thirty-Sixth General Congregation and Discernment.....	395
6.10	Observations.....	396
7	The Daily Examen in the Letters of Fathers General Over the Centuries.....	397
7.1	Diego Laínez and Claudio Aquaviva.....	398
7.1.1	Diego Laínez on the Examen.....	398
7.1.2	Claudio Aquaviva.....	399
7.2	Observations.....	410
7.3	Mucio Vitelleschi.....	410
7.4	Francesco Piccolomini.....	412
7.5	Jan Philip Roothaan and the <i>Spiritual Exercises</i>	413
7.5.1	The Role of the Examen.....	414
7.5.2	Observations.....	419
7.6	Wlodimir Ledóchowski.....	419
7.6.1	Observations.....	423
7.7	Pedro Arrupe.....	423
7.8	Peter-Hans Kolvenbach.....	424
7.9	Other Documents.....	427

7.10 Observations.....	428
8 Conclusion	428
Chapter 6	431
The Ignatian Examen in the Twentieth Century	431
1 Introduction.....	431
2 The <i>Monumenta</i> and Subsequent Research.....	432
3 José Calveras Santacana	439
3.1 Calveras and the Role of the Examen in the <i>Exercises</i>	439
3.2 Observations.....	444
4 Albert Görres and the Examen.....	444
4.1 Examen as Miniature Spiritual Exercise	445
4.2 Observations.....	449
5 Antoine Delchard and the Examen	449
5.1 Daily Choices and the Examen	449
5.1.1 Memory of Gratitude.....	450
5.1.2 God First	451
5.1.3 God-First Through Purity of Heart	452
5.2 Spiritual Progress and the Examen.....	454
5.2.1 Christian Moral Conscience.....	455
5.2.2 Ascetical and Spiritual Practice	457
5.2.3 Leading to Spiritual Maturity.....	458
5.3 Observations.....	461

6	Roy Howard's Examen.....	463
6.1	The Examen is a Prayer.....	463
6.2	The Examen as a Special Type of Prayer.....	464
6.3	The Examen in Relation to Vocation.....	466
6.4	Observations.....	467
7	Piet Penning de Vries and the Daily Examen.....	467
8	George Aschenbrenner and the Consciousness Examen.....	468
8.1	Examen and Prayer.....	470
8.2	The Five Steps.....	471
8.3	Observations.....	475
9	John English: The Examen in Relation to Discernment.....	476
9.1	Examen to Recognize the Movements.....	476
9.2	The Five Awareness Steps.....	477
9.2.1	Gratitude Awareness.....	477
9.2.2	Seeking Grace for Light.....	478
9.2.3	Investigation Awareness.....	479
9.2.4	Sorrow or Joy Awareness.....	480
9.2.5	Seeking the On-Going Grace.....	481
9.3	Observations.....	481
10	Miguel Ángel Fiorito: Conscience and its Examination.....	482
10.1	Conscience.....	482

10.2	The Practice of Examining One’s Conscience.....	484
10.3	Observations.....	487
11	Luis González and the Examen	488
11.1	The Examen in the <i>Exercises</i>	489
11.2	Observations.....	491
12	Other Contemporary Interpretations	492
13	Conclusion	496
	General Conclusion.....	499
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	511
	INDEX OF AUTHORS	553

Abbreviations

AA. VV.	Autores Varios/Various Authors
<i>AHSI</i>	<i>Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu</i>
<i>Auto.</i>	<i>Autobiography of St. Ignatius of Loyola</i>
BAC	Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Madrid
BIHSI	Biblioteca Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, Rome
Canisii	Beati Petri Canisii, Societatis Iesu: Epistulae et Acta, vols. 1-8
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
<i>Chron.</i>	Polanci Chronicon vols. 1-6
CIS	Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis, Rome
<i>Complementa</i>	Polanci Complementa, 2 vols.
<i>Const.</i>	Constitutions of the Society of Jesus
<i>DEI</i>	<i>Diccionario de Espiritualidad Ignaciana</i>
<i>DHCJ</i>	Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús
<i>Dir.</i>	Directorio de los Ejercicios espirituales
<i>DSp.</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de Spiritualité</i> , vols. 1-14
<i>DT</i>	<i>Diccionario de Teología</i>
<i>DTE</i>	<i>Diccionario teológico enciclopédico</i>
<i>Ej. Esp./EE</i>	<i>Ejercicios espirituales de san Ignacio de Loyola</i>
<i>Epp.</i>	S. Ignatii Epistolae et Instructiones, vols. 1-12
<i>EpSal.</i>	Epistolae Alfonso Salmeron vol. 1-2
<i>Fabri</i>	Fabri Monumenta
<i>FN</i>	Fontes Narrativi, vols. 1-4

<i>GC</i>	General Congregation of the Society of Jesus
<i>GEI</i>	Grupo de Espiritualidad Ignaciana
<i>GS</i>	Gaudium et Spes
<i>Ignaziana</i>	Ignaziana: Rivista di ricerca teologica, [http://www.ignaziana.org]
<i>IHSI</i>	Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu
<i>LG</i>	Lumen Gentium
<i>Manresa</i>	Manresa: Revista de espiritualidad ignaciana
<i>MHSI</i>	Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, Roma
<i>MI</i>	Monumenta Ignaciana
<i>Nadal</i>	Epistolae H. Nadal vols. 1-4
<i>ND</i>	Neuner - Dupuis, <i>The Christian Faith</i>
<i>NDCSp</i>	<i>The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality</i>
<i>NSCMD</i>	<i>New SCM Dictionary of Christian Spirituality</i>
<i>Obras</i>	<i>Obras de San Ignacio de Loyola</i> , BAC maior, 2014
<i>RfR</i>	<i>Review for Religious</i>
Sommervogel	Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus, Carlos Sommervogel, vols.1-9
<i>Sp. Ex.</i>	<i>Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola</i>
<i>SpDi.</i>	<i>Spiritual Diary of St. Ignatius of Loyola</i>
UPCo	Universidad Pontificia Comillas
<i>VS</i>	Veritatis Splendor

General Introduction

The examination of conscience has always been presented as an integral part of daily life, and yet there has not been any consensus on the way this is to be practiced. In the early formation period, this has been presented as part of preparation for confession, and in later years, the emphasis has been on the discerning aspect of it, almost denying any ascetical tone that could be given to it. The personal interest in this simple and yet effective practice aimed at growth in spiritual life emerged during the years of formation. Later, working on the theme of the Examen and discernment as the research paper of Licentiate helped me to look at it from close quarters. And the publication of a book titled *Understanding the Examen*¹ stimulated keener interest for an in-depth study on the theoretical presupposition of the Ignatian Examen.

Scope: We limit our work to the analysis of the daily five-point examen which would also include the Particular Examen since it is always taken up with the daily Examen. The scope of the work is to analyse and trace the varying interpretations over the centuries,

¹ Somy Mannoor, *Understanding the Examen: the Examen as a Daily Discernment*, Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2014.

on the crossroads of morality-spirituality. Our work would be mostly a historical study of the theme and so we deal with it chronologically, from Ignatius till the present day. We would be hoping to find the Ignatian roots of such multiple interpretations and possibly to highlight the recent preference for a spiritual discerning examen.

There have been studies done on the theme of the examination of conscience where the antecedence of Ignatius has been thoroughly analysed and the longstanding tradition prior to Ignatius is established.² Our study, we hope, would be complementary in the sense that we study the post-Ignatian period. The focus of our research is the interpretations of the Ignatian Examen from the Founder to the present day.

Thesis: The Ignatian Examen, as presented in the *Spiritual Exercises* [*Sp. Ex.* 43], has been interpreted in more than one way over the centuries. From Ignatius down the centuries we can find spiritual writers proposing the Examen as a means to grow in perfection by getting rid of sins or to grow in union with God by observing the ‘movements of spirits,’ ‘interior movements’ that are active. Ignatius, in the *Spiritual Exercises*, presents the Examen in the First Week, as an exercise in the purgative stage [*Sp. Ex.* 43]. A closer look would reveal that this is not the only moment when he talks of the Examen; there are various occasions when the examen is employed, be it in the review of meditations [*Sp. Ex.* 77], in the rules of discernment [*Sp. Ex.* 336], or in the First Method of Prayer [*Sp. Ex.* 271]. While acknowledging that all these do not have the same implications of the Examen, we would like to study the daily examination of conscience, commonly known as the Examen, as a spiritual exercise that Ignatius visualized as a way to get rid of all attachments and then to seek and find the will of God [*Sp. Ex.* 1].

Our thesis is that the Ignatian Examen is better understood in the crossroads of Morality and Spirituality – the convergence of moral teachings and spiritual principles provide the ambit to situate the shift in the ways this spiritual exercise is understood today.

² See Adelson Araujo Santos, “*Mas él examinándolo bien...*” (*Au 27*): *el examen de conciencia en la espiritualidad ignaciana*, Bilbao/Santander/Madrid: Mensajero/Sal Terrae/UPCo, 2016. He studies the philosophical and theological antecedents of the examen and looks at the influence of the examen in Jesuit formation.

The Examen, when taken not in isolation of the First Week but in the totality of Ignatian spirituality, can be understood as an exercise of finding God in one's daily events and therefore related to spiritual discernment.

Explanation: For centuries the Examen has been perceived as the close companion of those who look for perfection in spiritual life and often it is seen as a rigid method to evaluate the rightness/wrongness of one's actions. In recent years, many tend to take a different approach in talking about this spiritual practice and prefer to call it as the 'Consciousness Examen' where the focus is on what happens prior to an action, where the spirit moves. These two visions of an ascetical practice do not (always) coincide in their affirmations and what is surprising is that both visions are based on the same text of the *Spiritual Exercises*. However varied – and sometimes contradictory – may these interpretations be, they are representatives of a spirituality, both claiming originality and as authentically Ignatian.

During the course of the history of the Society of Jesus there have been Jesuits, in cultures and contexts so diverse, who offered this simple exercise as a means to make progress in spiritual life. Like their Founder, these spiritual masters too proposed the examen to people of simple faith – simple and uneducated persons or of weak constitution [*Sp. Ex.* 18] – in order to lead them to confess their sins or at other times to highly educated people who exerted influence and power – people engaged in public affairs [*Sp. Ex.* 19] – in order to lead them to choose what was of greater glory to God. The first companions of Ignatius profited much from the wisdom of the Pilgrim and shared this resource in their pastoral effort, in universities, with kings or queens, and in the formation of men who wanted to follow the footsteps of Ignatius, under the banner of the cross, as companions of Jesus. The examen has been presented as an indispensable part of the spiritual life, not only for those in formation but for all who desire to grow in familiarity with God.

The Examen is also proposed as part of an ascetical life where perfection in Christian virtues is attained through much abnegation and penances, and there are others who would insist that a mystic who seeks union with God through contemplation needs to practice the Examen faithfully. When Jesuits proposed the Examen to people of all kinds,

they affirmed that a mystical union or an ascetical reach to God is possible, and they invariably evoked the Examen. How do they present such an Examen over such diverse contexts and what type of vision do they have when they put forward this spiritual practice? What are the underlying assumptions of such interpretations? How have the interpretations of the Examen of the *Spiritual Exercises* changed over the centuries? We will look for answers in our study by going over the past five centuries, starting with Ignatius himself.

Division of the Work

We will divide our work into six chapters, and, though much desirable, these sections are not necessarily in chronological order. Keeping in mind uniformity (with regard to the length of the chapters) we have divided them into thematic groups. **The first chapter** will be a global vision of spirituality as well as morality where we will trace the historical developments and their interrelations. This we hope will become a structure and mould on which the subsequent chapters will be built. In this first chapter we would like to demarcate the basic notions of conscience, consciousness, confession, morality, and spirituality which in turn become a theoretical structure for the rest of the work. Our hypothesis, as already stated, is that the Examen is best understood in the interplay of Spirituality and Morality.

In **Chapter Two** we will study the writings of Ignatius in order to have a clearer vision of the Examen, not just in the *Spiritual Exercises* but in other Ignatian corpus as well. Since there are existing studies done on the prehistory of the Ignatian Examen, we will deal here in passing the better-known sources – the *Spiritual Exercises*, the *Constitutions* – and look in detail the *Autobiography*, *Spiritual Diary* and his vast correspondence. Here we will also deal with the writings of some of the First Companions. The writings of Jesuits who worked closely with the Founder and who shared personal relationship with him, we hope, would provide us with closer understanding of how the Founder's spirit was perceived and shared by the very first generation of Jesuits.

In **Chapter Three** we hope to study the interpretations of various Jesuits in the first century of the Society of Jesus. The focus of this chapter would be what authors like

Cordeses, Suárez, La Palma, La Puente or Alonso Rodríguez have to say on the practice of the Examen. We believe that their vision of this spiritual practice would highlight the role and importance of the daily Examen, especially since the corresponding period witnessed rapid growth of the Society of Jesus not only numerically, but in influence as well. The spiritual authors of this time also represent a period when Spanish spirituality enjoyed much admiration and acceptance. In the history of the Society of Jesus, the first sixty years have been crucial as a definite course was being ironed out and these authors would be representatives of a vibrant, defining period of Ignatian Spirituality.

In contrast, our **Fourth Chapter** will be a panoramic vision of what we can call a French era as we closely study Jesuits who talk of the Examen mostly in the 17th century. The striking feature of this era would be the dominance of the French in spiritual writings and it will be fascinating to analyse the way in which they approached the Examen. Among the authors, we have chosen as representatives, the majority would be classified under mystics and this we hope would throw open newer aspects of the Examen.

In **Chapter 5** we will club together a large chunk of documents of the Society of Jesus – the General Congregations (GCs), *Regulae*, Letters of Fathers General – with the hope that our study could capture the mind of the Society. We look at the *Regulae* that contain all the regulations before the *Constitutions* came into effect with an idea that we can capture the official line of the Society even when the organizational structure was still fluid. The *Ratio Studiorum* and the *Directorios 1599* are two important documents that we would want to analyse since they have, especially the latter, by and large changed the course of Ignatian spiritual history. The letters of Fathers General form another source in mapping the course of the Examen since Jesuit Generals address the Society on matters that concern the universal body and often they are aimed to rectify maladies that trouble a large number of Jesuits. There is no doubt that the General Congregations are the best official document that allow a glance into the inner life of the Society and so they take up a good part of our fifth chapter.

The course of the examen in the 20th Century onwards will be analysed in the **Sixth Chapter** and here we will take a look at a wide variety of sources like spiritual writings,

discourses of Generals, other research material and so on. We believe that this period, loosely termed as 20th Century, would be crucial in our analysis for multiple reasons: strict scientific methods in research and the call for ‘aggiornamento’ in the Vatican Council II that changed life in the Church. We analyse here how the project of *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu* and the subsequent availability of Ignatian sources – using scientific tools – initiated a new perspective of Ignatian spirituality and its possible influence in the interpretation of the Examen. Here we hope to trace the significant moments in the whole sequence of the chronology of the Ignatian Examen.

Methodology

Firstly, as a historical study on the course of Ignatian Examen, we hope to study as many authors as possible who could provide a better historical picture of the practice of the Examen. We have chosen the period from Ignatius until the present day for our research keeping in mind that there have been other studies done on the pre-Ignatian era where the philosophical presuppositions of the Examen have been studied. Since the focus of our study is mainly the interpretations of the Examen in the Society of Jesus, we have chosen only Jesuit authors even though there would be other writers who deal with the same theme. Though our focus here is the history of the interpretations, it is not an anthology on the Examen nor would it be an account of personal experiences of individual who practice the Examen. Neither would it be a pedagogy of this spiritual exercise³ but rather our attention will be on documents that deal with Ignatian Spirituality or the history of the Society of Jesus. As such, the examen being one of the spiritual exercises, we cannot but refer to other related themes, as and when needed, to have clarity with regard to the practice of the examen.

We adopt a historical method for our work and thus we will be making use of the primary sources and original languages as far as possible. We would be relying on the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu* as the main source for the writings of Ignatius as well

³ See for example the Tesina of Sze Siong Chia, *The Ignatian Examen: A Historical Review and its Contemporary Applications*, Madrid: UPCo, 2015. He has done a case study on the practice of the examen by Jesuits in formation in Spain.

as most of the first companions, while, for rest of the authors, we use their writings in the original language, when they are in Spanish, Italian, English or French. Some of our sources, like the *Constitutions* of the Society of Jesus, are documents meant exclusively for Jesuits while others are open to a wider public and for the same reason our research is not exclusively for Jesuits, but open to all. Besides offering an historical account, ours is also a work in spiritual theology where we would like to reflect on the theological and moral dimensions of this spiritual practice that was dear to Ignatius. Our hope is that this work will aid in a better understanding of this spiritual exercise.

Acknowledgments

This work is realized today thanks to the helping hand of many and I would like to recall them with gratitude. Though it would not be possible to name all those who have supported me in these years, I would like to acknowledge the significant contributions.

First and foremost, I express my deep gratitude to Prof. Dr. Pascual Cebollada Silvestre whose guidance, meticulous and patient corrections and timely suggestions have paved way for this thesis. I thank the professors of Universidad Pontificia Comillas for the help and encouragement that helped me immensely during these years. Particularly, I would like to thank Prof. José García de Castro for leading me to the rich resources of the Ignatian heritage and to Prof. Luis María García Domínguez as well as Prof. Manuel Revuelta for the time they have dedicated. While acknowledging the support of Fr. George Fernandes, S.J., the provincial of Jamshedpur Jesuit Province, I also thank the Spanish Jesuit Province for all the help. I am indebted to my family and friends for their wholehearted support in these last years.

Chapter 1

Conscience, Confession and the Interplay of Spirituality and Morality

1 Introduction

Spirituality undoubtedly is a new term which began to be employed largely in the beginning of twentieth century and yet in a short span it assumes a variety of notions. This polyvalent term is now not limited to Catholic or Christian ambit, but goes beyond to all religions and even to experiences that are not necessarily associated with religions. Traditionally spirituality has been associated with morality; it was talked in relation to moral theology. It is true that in recent times there is greater focus on the relation between spiritual theology and dogmatic theology and yet the relation with moral theology is crucial.¹ In our study of the interpretations of the daily examen over the centuries, we would

¹ Cf. Saturnino Gamarra, *Teología espiritual*, Madrid: BAC, 1994, pp. 15ff.

like to analyse the spiritual, the moral and the confessional contexts of Ignatius in order to understand his presuppositions better. This would serve as a backdrop against which we hope to present the interpretations of daily examen – the examen as a spiritual exercise on the crossroads of morality and spirituality.

In this chapter, we take a closer look at what is meant by the terms spirituality, morality, conscience and consciousness, and we hope to show how spirituality and morality are interrelated. We would like to set limit to what we understand by spirituality as the term could be interpreted in many number of ways. Our attempt here also would be to chart the separation of spirituality from theology, meanwhile also attempting to retrieve the connection between these two spheres of Christian theology. In order to achieve this, we will be relying on the existing studies on spirituality, morality and conscience.

Undoubtedly, the practice of confession is closely associated with morality, and we aim to trace the earliest association of these fields as well as to track the evolution of this important sacrament in the Church. The evolution of confessional practices in the Church has indeed marked a definite path for moral as well as spiritual life of faithful and in the following sections we would like to bring out such connections, which will serve as a launching pad for our study on the history of the Ignatian examen.

2 The Identity of Spirituality and Morality

The term spirituality evokes multiple meanings today, depending on the context and culture. Though, of late spirituality is the most sought-after topic, there is no uniformity in what is meant by it and many aspects tend to be covered by the term spirituality. Some would describe such fluid situation as follows:

resurgence in interest in spiritual practices characterizes contemporary spirituality. What classifies as a spiritual practice is also undergoing redefinition. Yoga, tai chi, meditation, chanting, spiritual reading, journaling, fasting, rituals, volunteering, almsgiving, the practice of non-violence, retreats, creative projects, recycling, mindful homemaking, vegetarianism, massage, physical exercise, riding public transport instead of driving a car, backpacking and simplifying one's lifestyle all fall under the heading of spiritual practices [...]. Often practices are tied to beneficial results experienced in one's life, such as

increased sense of self-esteem, lessening of anxiety, and the sense of contributing to the sustainability of the planet or the easing of another's suffering.²

In the Church, there is keener interest post Vatican Council II and this recent phenomenon is attributed to multiple factors³ and some point to the following reasons for the emergence of spirituality as the frontrunner:

the reason for the new interest are complex, cultural as well as theological, but the interest centred on the experience of the search for meaning, transcendence, personal integration and social transformation which engaged many people in the West in the aftermath of the world wars, the depression, the cold war, the theological and ecclesial upheaval of Vatican II, and the explorations of 'inner space' that the development of the human and personal sciences, especially clinical psychology and psychoanalysis, had unleashed. Although many people found resources for their spiritual quest in the mainline churches, an increasing number of people did not. They turned to eastern mystical religions, to mind-expanding drugs, to 'new religious movements', to occult practices, or to idiosyncratic synthesis of beliefs and practices. Others began to discover riches in the Christian tradition that had been underemphasized or even deliberately obscured for centuries, for example the mystical literature, monastic practices, retreats, personal spiritual direction, and various kinds of group spiritual practice which seemed to offer a more personal and authentic religious experience than did the routines of organized religion.⁴

By spirituality what is meant, then, is not just pious practices, but more of experience and lifestyles of group of individuals.

In the Christian understanding, then, spirituality would refer to the ways in which Christian beliefs are practiced: "Christian spirituality refers to the ways in which the particularities of Christian beliefs about God, the material world and human identity find expression in values, lifestyles and spiritual practices. Christian spirituality embodies a conscious relationship with God, in Jesus Christ, through the indwelling of the Spirit, in the context of a community of believers."⁵ Since the term spirituality is ambiguous and has undergone astounding expansion in the recent years, we would like to define what we mean by this.

² Valerie Lesniak, "Contemporary Spirituality," in *NSCMD*, pp. 7-12, here p. 12.

³ Many identify a keener interest in spirituality starting from 1980s, not only in the Catholic Church but in most churches. The reason for such interest are varied like spiritual maturation of Catholics since Vatican Council II, increased interest to integrate faith and life, biblical and liturgical renewal and so on. Cf. Sandra M. Schneiders, "Spirituality in the Academy," in *Theological Studies* 50 (1989) pp. 676-697, here p. 676, especially footnote 1.

⁴ Sandra M. Schneiders, "Christian Spirituality: Definitions, Methods, Types," in *NSCMD*, pp. 1-6, here p. 3.

⁵ Philip Sheldrake, "Introduction," in *NSCMD*, p. viii.

2.1 Etymology of the Term Spirituality

The Majority of scholars are of the opinion that the term ‘Spirituality,’ in its modern sense, derives from a French *spiritualité* and its usage began from the beginning of 20th century,⁶ and ever since came into usage in other languages.⁷ The first usage of it is reported in 17th century.⁸ Although *spiritualité* was used in French for devout life, it referred mostly to the teaching of some authors who were considered mystical and even not all orthodox.⁹ At first *spiritualité* was used for suspect mysticism and so it was used very rarely. However, the adjective *spirituel* was used along with similar expressions *vie spirituelle*, *famille spirituelle*, *avancement spirituel*, *biens spirituels*, *guide spirituel*, etc.¹⁰ In the first decade of the 20th century, *spirituel* began to be used abundantly and *surnaturel* was a frequent synonym for *spiritual*. “The outstanding present-day fact about SPIRITUALITÉ as a word is that it is now used almost entirely as a synonym for either “VIE SPIRITUELLE” or “SCIENCE SPIRITUELLE” (apart from the basic designation of *spiritual being* or *spiritual qualities*). Both SPIRITUALITÉ and VIE SPIRITUELLE – or equivalent expressions – are universally accepted as general terms covering ASCÉSE and MYSTIQUE as subdivisions.”¹¹ After a forgotten-existence for centuries, the term *spiritualité* came alive with two influential works *Manuel de spiritualité* of Auguste Saudreau (1917) and *La spiritualité Catholique* by Pierre Pourrat (1918-1928).¹² The usage of the term ‘Spirituality’ became frequent in English after the translation of many works from French, especially the above-mentioned classics in spirituality.

⁶ Cf. Aimé Solignac, “Spiritualité,” in *DSp* vol. XIV, pp. 1142-1160. The entry “Spiritualité,” is coauthored by Aimé Solignac and Michel Dupuy, Solignac wrote the first part “Le mot et l’histoire,” while Dupuy wrote the latter part titled “La notion de spiritualité” pp. 1160-1173.

⁷ The term *spiritualité* has possible Latin origin *spiritualis*. For a detailed study on this see Solignac, “Spiritualité,” pp. 1142, 1150.

⁸ Lucy Tinsley in her detailed study of the terms ‘spirituality and devotion’ in French, affirms that *spiritualitas* is not found in Vulgate, but developed later and yet is not present in old French. She concludes that this is a recent term. Cf. Lucy Tinsley, *The French Expression for Spirituality and Devotion: A Semantic Study*, Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953, pp. 9ff.

⁹ At one point their teaching was considered heretical and it was applied for people like Fenelon, Madame Guyon, Marie de l’Incarnación. See *ibid*.

¹⁰ Cf. Tinsley, *The French Expression*, pp. 268ff.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

¹² See Walter H. Principe, “Spirituality, Christian,” in *NDCSp*, pp. 931-938, here p. 931.

On the other hand, Walter Principe is of the opinion that the earliest reference to spirituality could go back to Pauline writings. The word spirituality derives from the Latin word *spiritualitas*, an abstract word that is related to *spiritus* and *spiritualis*, which were employed to translate Paul's *pneuma* and *pneumatikos*. In his earlier writings "spirit" (*pneuma*) is opposed to "flesh" (Greek *sarx*; Latin *caro*), and "spiritual" (*pneumatikos*) is set over against either "fleshly" (Greek *psychikos*; Latin *animalis*) or animal.¹³ Later they are contrasted neither with "body" (Greek *soma*; Latin *corpus*) or "bodily" (Greek *somatikos*; Latin *corporalis*) nor with "matter" (Greek *hyle*; Latin *materia*). Thus for Paul, "the pneumatic or spiritual person is one whose whole being or life are ordered, led, or influenced by the "Spirit of God" (Greek *Pneuma Theou*; Latin *Spiritus Dei*), whereas the person who is "sarkic," that is "carnal" or "fleshly" or who is "psychic" or "animal," is one whose whole being and life are opposed to God's Spirit."¹⁴ For Paul, as it is clear, the opposition is not between the incorporeal and the corporeal or between the immaterial and material, but between two ways of life. From this we can conclude that one's body and one's psychic soul (Greek *psyche*; Latin *anima*) can, just like one's spirit, be spiritual if led by the Spirit, and one's spirit, mind, or will can be carnal if opposed to the Spirit. This Pauline sense of the term *spiritualitas* was in use until the 12th century when it was being used as opposed to *corporalitas* or *materialitas*. This changed the Pauline religious meaning, setting the atmosphere for a confused and divisive use which later gave rise to the great divide and spirituality having contempt for matter or body.¹⁵

A third possible origin of the term Spirituality draws on the word *ruach*, a term that denotes 'spirit' but also extends to 'breath' and 'wind' alluding to the Holy Spirit.¹⁶ The Spirit is the source of life and hence the term Spirituality indicates life of faith – the aspect that motivates, sustains and develops life in general. It is, hence, not about mere ideas but

¹³ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.* See also Michel Dupuy "Spiritualité," in *DSp* vol. XIV, p. 1161.

¹⁵ "The new meaning prepared for a later widespread view that confused spirituality with disdain for the body and matter. Together with this philosophical meaning, the earlier Pauline view continued in authors such as Thomas Aquinas. Still further meanings appeared later: persons exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction were called the *spiritualitas*, or "lords spiritual," as opposed to those exercising civil jurisdiction, the *temporalitas*, or "lords temporal"; next ecclesiastical property came to be called *spiritualitas*, and the property of the civil ruler *temporalitas*." Principe, "Spirituality, Christian," p. 931.

¹⁶ See Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Spirituality: An Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999, p. 1.

about the way in which the Christian life is conceived and lived out. Spirituality theretofore is about what a person does with what they believe – it is the outworking in real life of a person’s religious faith.¹⁷

Spirituality can then be termed as a way of living out the encounter with Jesus Christ. “The term “Christian spirituality” refers to the way in which the Christian life is understood and the explicitly devotional practices which have been developed to foster and sustain that relationship with Christ.”¹⁸ In other words

Christian spirituality has to do with *our way of being Christian*, in response to the call of God, issued through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the *life in the Holy Spirit who incorporates the Christian into the Body of Jesus Christ, through whom the Christian has access to God in the Creator in a life of faith, hope, and service*” and “Christian spirituality, therefore, is trinitarian, Christological, ecclesiological, pneumatological, and eschatological. It is rooted in the life of the triune God, centered on Jesus Christ, situated in the Church, ever responsive to the Holy Spirit, and oriented always to the coming of God’s Reign in all its fullness at the end of human history.”¹⁹

There is no single Christian spirituality rather, there is one spirit and many spiritualities since ‘whatever is received is received according to the mode of the receiver.’ This is because the many spiritualities are results of interpretation of ‘our way of being Christian’ in specific historic contexts.

2.2 The Term Spirituality Through History

Historically Christian spirituality can trace its origin back as far as to the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and Israel where the people were convinced of the nearness and presence of God. In the New Testament Jesus proclaimed the nearness of God (Mk. 1:15) in a new way; it is through the death and resurrection of Jesus that all are liberated from sin and new life given (Rm. 6:3-11), and Christian spirituality is knowing this truth, having hope in what we know, and living according to that hope.²⁰ In the first centuries martyrdom provided an ideal means for union with God, for martyrdom was related to the

¹⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁹ Richard P. McBrien, *Catholicism* (New Edition), New York: HarperCollins, 1994, p. 1020.

²⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 1021-1022.

death and resurrection of Jesus – being witness to Christ and thus living the spirituality. Later years, on the face of the impossibility of martyrdom, two figures who contributed to the understanding of spirituality were Origen who suggested that a life of complete self-sacrifice was a kind of unbloody martyrdom, and Clement of Alexandria who talked of every death as a true martyrdom when approached with proper dispositions.²¹ Against the backdrop of Gnosticism, Origen taught that the soul must struggle to uproot itself from the world in which it is buried by selfish desires, while Clement of Alexandria identified the summit of Christian consciousness in the knowledge of the God of love by loving as God loves.²²

Monasticism, having its roots in the New Testament and that which called to live a life of ‘celibacy for the sake of the kingdom’ (Mt. 19:12) and living a life of poverty (Lk. 9:60), had a lasting effect in shaping Christian spirituality.²³ Monastic life was considered as the continuation of apostolic life by persevering together in prayer, in the community of goods as well as in the breaking of bread. Such dedicated life along with the practice of consecrated virgins would lead up to the development of new monastic movement that held the view that “the soul finds union with God only in going beyond itself, by rejecting all particular knowledge and allowing itself to be absorbed totally in the knowledge of God, whose intra-Trinitarian life of love overflows in a stream of self-communicating goodness in creation.”²⁴ Around this period, the whole spiritual life was divided into three stages – the purgative, illuminative and unitive, categories that are used till today to refer to growth in spiritual life.

Prominent figures like Augustine of Hippo, John Cassian and Benedict of Nursia drew from this monastic tradition and taught authoritatively on spiritual matters. By teaching “spiritual discernment does not bring us knowledge of God in Christ so much as *self-knowledge* in the light of Christ, the teacher of wisdom” Augustine gave a new

²¹ See *ibid.*, p. 1022.

²² Cf. *ibid.* Origen’s insistence that prayer, which involved the action of all three Persons of the Trinity, should pervade the entire life of Christians.

²³ Antony of Egypt and other hermits who went into the desert to confront the devil sought to win over the dark forces of evil through ascetic practices.

²⁴ McBrien, *Catholicism*, p. 1024.

direction to spirituality, while Cassian taught that the monk is not to seek anything beyond the Kingdom of God, and that only purity of heart will open mysteries of the Kingdom to him. He taught that Christian life is one of constant prayer wholly inspired by the Gospel.²⁵ Benedict, the author of the *Rule* and regarded as the patriarch of Western monasticism, taught that observance and obedience as most important in the perfect following of Christ. Prudence and humanity form the core teaching, and he emphasized that common life was the basic of asceticism. Benedict's interpretation that the divine presence is everywhere and, in every place, – and that this presence is most concentrated in the superior who mediates the will of God – marked much of spirituality of the subsequent centuries. Another key spiritual figure is Gregory the Great who's works on faith and piety, especially *Regula Pastoralis*, influenced the Church definitively.²⁶

Over the years, while the monasteries followed the ascetical ideal, austerity characterized by penitential practices became part of the spiritual life of laity as well. The spread of such monastic ideals among the laity would define the tenth and eleventh centuries and long pilgrimages and self-flagellation were the most common means of making reparation for sin or curbing one's unruly appetites. It was the work of John of Fecamp that recommended quiet, meditative reading to induce unimpeded and undistracted thoughts about God. Contemplative prayer was gaining popularity and the Cistercian Order, as the renewed followers of the Rule of Benedict, made prominent the mystical element of Christian spirituality. Bernard of Clairvaux and William of St. Thierry – who regarded the soul as being the image of God – taught that a soul can be restored to perfection through contemplative life that conforms oneself to the Word of God.

In contrast to these developments, the mendicant orders, Franciscans and Dominicans to mention a few, brought a more realistic approach to poverty and service by being closer to the ordinary people: Dominic combined the best of monasticism with the best of the apostolic life, while Francis of Assisi insisted on the imitation of the life of

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ This work, 'Pastoral Norms', was a practical treatise on the spirituality and ministerial skills required of bishops and of all who have the care of souls. Gregory also advocated monastic type of life, following the Benedictine rules. See *ibid.*, p. 1025.

Christ in all its simplicity and poverty.²⁷ At the beginning of the fourteenth century, a wave of spiritual movement began in the Rhineland and the Low Countries that spread to other parts of the world, and whose main concern was the soul's union with God, where the union was the zenith in contemplation.²⁸

The medieval emphasis on reverence to relics, its emotionalism coupled with superstition paved way for Protestant movements, and a spirituality that gave importance to the uniqueness of the Christian believer's relationship with God at the personal conscience. Luther's insistence on faith and scripture would invariably change the course of spiritual life in the Church.²⁹ In the counter reformation era, Ignatius of Loyola insisted on personal conversion through methods in prayer, where he also gave importance to contemplation in action, finding God in the world as opposed to earlier flight from it. It was also during this period that devotion to Mary and the saints, along with life of sacraments gained importance. The mystical way became prominent, especially in Spain with Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross and Ignatius of Loyola. In the following century, the development in spirituality in France centered on the life of Christ and saints, where mystics and missionaries were the models for spiritual life.³⁰ Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary became prominent when a theology of heart – heart symbolising the overflowing love of God – came to limelight, especially with Jean Eudes and later with Mary Alacoque. This was also the time when efforts were made to take spirituality out of monasteries to the reach of ordinary people through emphasis on Christian life and everyday occupations.

²⁷ Two great theologians of these orders were the Dominican Thomas Aquinas who emphasized the interrelation between contemplation and action – sharing with others the fruit of the contemplative life –, and the Franciscan Bonaventure, who reflected the principle of sacramentality of Assisi, saw the creation as a mirror reflecting the power, wisdom and goodness of God. See *ibid.*, pp. 1026-1027.

²⁸ This emphasis on the interior life and complete abandonment can be found in Hildegard von Bingen, Hedwig of Silesia as well as in the work *The Cloud of Unknowing*. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 1028.

²⁹ Luther's concern was to find a direct approach to God, one in which the individual is illumined by the interior witness of the Holy Spirit, whereas the Catholic approach was that the relationship with God is a mediated one and there is no fully authentic Christian spirituality without the realization of an equal co-presence of fellow-believers with Christ. See Louis Bouyer, *Introduction to Spirituality*, New York: Desclée, 1961, p. 11. See also McBrien, *Catholicism*, p. 1029.

³⁰ Some of the well-known spiritual directors are Francis de Sales, Madame Acarie and Pierre Bérulle who developed a personal approach to the life of prayer.

Notwithstanding the negative developments around the suppression of many religious orders, nineteenth century provided the link between medieval and modern spirituality: while there were scientific and technological advances, developments in psychology and sociology there was also renewal in theology, liturgy, of historical studies and social ministry, all of which shaped the course of Christian spirituality.³¹ However, the last decades of this century saw spirituality being stagnant and hampered by the separation of spirituality from theology.

In the twentieth century, those spiritualities that were identified with charismatic individuals earlier, began to be associated with ‘schools’, i.e. they were identified with religious orders, and pluralism dominated the whole spectrum of theology and spirituality. What the history of Christian and Catholic spirituality makes clear in this era is its pluralistic character. At the beginning of the twentieth century pluralism was taken for granted because there were spiritualities, not a spirituality. And Catholic spiritual writings during the first half of the twentieth century reflected this ambivalent character of Catholic theology itself.³² During this period, liturgical movements, renewed by historical and biblical studies, guided spirituality in a more Christocentric direction.³³ Adolphe Tanquerey, through his manual of spiritual theology *The Spiritual Life*, and Garrigou-Lagrange with *The Three Ages of the Interior Life* exerted much influence on the course of spirituality prior to the Vatican Council II. Another figure, in stark contrast to these above, was ‘The Little Flower’ Theresa of Lisieux, who taught the world that sanctity is not achieved through extreme mortification, but through continual renunciation in small matters, and her simple yet practical spirituality had profound impact on the years that followed.

³¹ During the French Revolution, many religious orders were suppressed and the period of Enlightenment saw more secularization. In the second half of 19th century, many new apostolic congregations and lay movements were started. Spirituality became more introspective and popular piety tended to become increasingly supernaturalism. Cf. McBrien, *Catholicism*, p. 1033.

³² Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 1034-1035.

³³ McBrien identifies Columba Marmion and Charles de Foucauld as two key figures in such a renewal. For Marmion, the Lord is not our distant judge but the source of love, affection, and sympathy, for he is truly human himself, and it is in the Eucharist that this action of Christ becomes effective. Foucauld gave importance to the following of Christ in the way of poverty and humility, who believed that to take the lowest place among humankind is to be close to Jesus. See *ibid.*, p. 1035, 1037-1038.

Around the middle of the twentieth century, the shift in the focus of spirituality was about God who shines through the universe (*diaphany*), rather than about God appears (*epiphany*). It was a spirituality oriented to the world, especially promoted by Teilhard de Chardin through *The Divine Milieu*. “We attain an experience of God not, as the traditional ascetical manualists argues, exclusively through purgation, contemplation, and mystical union, or a kind of ‘meditation with closed eyes.’ Rather we encounter God by turning toward the things of the earth in love and reverence. The natural delight we take in life and in all that exists is the first dawn of divine illumination.”³⁴ The change from a negative to a positive attitude toward the world is also seen in the writings of Thomas Merton, Eugene Boylan, and the like. It was acknowledged that the universal vocation to holiness was for all baptized and not for a few, and Louis Bouyer insisted that spirituality is engaged wherever there is a personal relationship with God.³⁵ The Vatican Council II, once and for all, laid to rest the assumption that spirituality is for priests and nuns alone when it said,

the Lord Jesus, the divine Teacher and Model of all perfection, preached holiness of life to each and every one of His disciples of every condition [...]. Indeed, He sent the Holy Spirit upon all men that He might move them inwardly to love God with their whole heart and their whole soul, with all their mind and all their strength and that they might love each other as Christ loves them [...]. Thus, it is evident to everyone, that all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity.³⁶

The post-conciliar era has been marked by intense liturgical renewal, deepening reverence for Sacred Scriptures, an increased striving for a personal experience of the Holy Spirit as well as a growing sense of equality of all members, shaping the contemporary spirituality.³⁷

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 1038-1039.

³⁵ “Spirituality is engaged wherever there is a personal relationship with God. Christian spirituality is engaged where that personal relationship is grounded in God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ. Catholic spirituality is more deliberately ecclesial. The Word-made-flesh is proclaimed and encountered in the Church. It is not only the content of the Word that one finds in the Church, but the Word itself.” As quoted in *ibid.*, p. 1041.

³⁶ *LG* 40.

³⁷ It was at the post conciliar era that a greater consciousness of equality for women in the Church and in the society at large began to take shape and gave rise to Feminist spirituality. Then came about liberation theology and spirituality.

2.3 Use of Other Terms Over the Centuries

Having looked at what spirituality means etymologically and the changing significance of it over the centuries, we would like to clarify other terms employed often as synonymous with spirituality: ascetical and mystical theology as well as spiritual theology. We have seen that from St. Paul's time, the *pneumatikos* (the spiritual one) was used to denote the harmonious unity that should exist between Christian doctrine and piety, taking inspiration from the New Testament – where doctrine means also life – theology was always spiritual theology.³⁸ This same understanding of theology dominated the patristic era when it was held that

theology is not simply intellectual activity, it is also the object of love, inseparable from prayer. The meaning of 'wisdom' in St Augustine's teaching, or the 'loving contemplation' of St Gregory the Great, may represent the kind of theology which is never separated from love. The unity finds its supreme expression in the golden age of monastic theology, initiated by Gregory and Augustine and developed by Anselm and Bernard, in which true theology by definition must be spiritual.³⁹

With scholastic theology, the term 'theology' itself began to be understood as intellectual speculation and later theology gradually dissociated itself from spiritual life.

In other words, the distinction between knowledge and love led to separation and even a divorce, and the great chasm between theology and spirituality continued to widen, and as a result, two theologies were developing – one that is scientific, theoretical and dry speculation; the other a pious, affective theology unrelated to solid theological doctrine. Megyer observes that

it would have been tautological to call theology spiritual; but from the end of the fourteenth century, the tension between religious knowledge and spiritual life stretched to the breaking point: The theologian became a specialist in an autonomous field of knowledge, which he could enter by the use of a technique independent of the witness of his own life, of its personal holiness or sinfulness. The spiritual man, on the other hand, became a *dévot* who cared nothing for theology; one for whom his own experience

³⁸ The evangelist John is called the theologian because he is the one who has contemplated the mystery of incarnation and possessed the experience of faith upon which he reflected. Cf. Eugene Megyer, "Theological Trends: Spiritual Theology Today," in *The Way* 21 (1981) pp. 55-67, here pp. 55-56.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

ultimately became an end itself, without reference to the dogmatic content to be sought in it.⁴⁰

Specialization in this era led to separation and often exclusion of one from the other.

Giovanni Battista Scaramelli is often termed as the one who formally divided the whole spiritual doctrine into ascetical and mystical in his works *Direttorio ascetico* and *Direttorio mistico*, as until then spirituality was considered as that part of theology which dealt with Christian perfection. The contention is that until then spiritual theology had formed an organic whole but henceforth it was split into two compartments.⁴¹ Ever since the publication of Scaramelli's *Direttorio*, ascetic theology dealt with exercises needed for perfection while mystical theology dealt with mystical union, the extraordinary states and its secondary manifestations.⁴² Though there is debate about how this division began, it is clear that from eighteenth century the separation was real and the distance between ascetical theology and mystical theology widened.

Another term that was being employed before this separation was *Theologia mystica* and authors dealt with the purgative way of beginners, the illuminative way of proficient, and of the unitive way of the perfect. They also spoke of infused contemplation and the extraordinary graces which sometimes accompany it, and such works dealt with experimental mystical theology, that is, of infused contemplation itself.⁴³ Many authors around this period considered that ascetical theology treats of the purgative way of beginners who act under *ex industria propria*, while mystical theology begins with

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Though there are popular voices that fix the responsibility of such division on Scaramelli, it is an inconclusive judgment according to Guibert. "Some sharp criticism has been stirred up by this division into two *Directories*, the one ascetical and the other mystical. From it some have tried to draw an argument making Scaramelli responsible for a regrettable dismemberment of spiritual theology [...]. It seems scarcely deniable that the large circulation of Scaramelli's two *Directories* and the high authority which they enjoyed have contributed much toward spreading among spiritual writers a division which is debatable [...]. In any case he is not the author of the division. A full century earlier in 1655 the Polish Franciscan Chrysostom Dobrosielski explicitly used the division, including the attachment of the epithets "ordinary" and "extraordinary" respectively to the term "ascetical" and "mystical." Joseph de Guibert, *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice, A Historical Study*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1986, pp. 417-418.

⁴² See Pierre Pourrat, *Christian Spirituality*, 4 vols., London: Burns & Oates, 1922, especially vol. 1.

⁴³ Cf. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Three Ages of Interior Life*, vol. 1, St. Louis: Herder Books, 1948, p. 214.

illuminative way in which the proficient act under supernatural grace of the Holy Spirit, that is to say, under special inspiration they are no longer acting under *ex industria propria*.⁴⁴ But today we know that this division is no more held – ascetical and mystical are no longer strangers. Moreover, ascetical theology is to meant to lead people to mystical theology and so mystical theology that does not presuppose serious asceticism is definitely a false one.

The terms ascetic and mystical theology were substituted by spiritual theology and Charles André Bernard describes it as follows: “la teología espiritual es una disciplina teológica que, basada en los principios de la revelación, estudia la experiencia espiritual cristiana, describe su desarrollo progresivo y da a conocer sus estructuras y sus leyes.”⁴⁵ Accordingly spiritual theology is a theological discipline, in the sense that it is based on the principles of revelation and presents salvation history in its twofold aspects: objectively, the actualization of God's covenant, and subjectively, the application of covenant to the diversity of historical conditions and to the uniqueness of the temporal and personal existence. Spiritual theology is also subordinated to dogmatic theology, since it relates man to God as the moving agent, the beginning and end of his spiritual life.⁴⁶

As we have seen, the treatment of ascetical and mystical theology as two separate entities created much confusion and so some authors intended a reconciliation. One such effort, among many others, was by Adolphe Tanquerey who called ascetical theology

that part of spiritual doctrine whose proper object is both the theory and the practice of Christian perfection, from its very beginnings up to the threshold of infused contemplation. We place the beginning of perfection in a sincere desire of advancing in the spiritual life; Ascetic Theology guides the soul from this beginning, through the *purgative* and *illuminative* ways, as far as *active* contemplation or the *simple unitive* way. Mystical theology is that part of spiritual doctrine whose proper object is both the theory and the practice *of the contemplative life*, which begins with what is called the first night of the senses [...].⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 216.

⁴⁵ Charles André Bernard, *Teología espiritual*, Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 2007, p. 88.

⁴⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 92ff.; Megyer, “Theological Trends,” p. 61.

⁴⁷ Adolphe Tanquerey, *The Spiritual Life: A Treatise on Ascetical and Mystical Theology*, Leuven: Desclée, 1930, pp. 5-6.

By refusing to define ascetical theology as the science of ‘ordinary ways’ or mystical as that of ‘extraordinary ways,’ they underline the fact there is a continuity running through these two stages, in spite of the profound differences.⁴⁸ The discussions and debates around this have ensured that the ascetical and mystical came to be accepted as two phases of the very same dynamism, two modes of experiencing the same life.⁴⁹ Scholars identify two phases in this movement of integration namely the integration of spiritual theology within itself and also within the science of theology. In the beginning of 20th century, these two terms began to be used synonymously, and the accent of the unity of Christian experience paved way for the unification not only of ascetical and mystical theology, but even that of moral theology. The whole course of moral theology and its relation to theology in general as well its relation with spirituality in particular need a closer look and which we will be studying in detail in the following section.

2.4 Present Day Uses of the Term Spirituality

Today scholars tend to talk of spirituality in relation to lifestyles and practices of everyday life, because spirituality is always particular, i.e. spirituality is always grounded in historical-cultural context.⁵⁰ Today many talk of spirituality in terms of fundamental human dimension, as a lived experience and as an academic discipline.

2.4.1 Fundamental Human Dimension

Scholars tend to term spirituality as an ‘Anthropological Constant’ by pointing out that it is a characteristic of humans to transcend oneself through knowledge and love – to

⁴⁸ “We thus avoid defining Ascetical Theology as the science of the ordinary ways of perfection, and Mystical Theology as the science of the extraordinary ways [...]. Surely there are profound differences between them. These we shall take care to point out later. There is, all the same, a certain continuity running through these two states, ascetic and mystic, which makes the one a sort of preparation for the other [...]. One thing is certain, the study of Mystical Theology throws no little light upon Ascetic Theology and, vice versa. This, because there is harmony in God’s ways [...]. These two parts of one and the same science naturally throw light on one another and their union is profitable to both.” Ibid., p. 6.

⁴⁹ “These seemingly abstract and academic discussions brought about at least one practical result; the ‘ascetical’ and ‘mystical’ came to be accepted as two phases of the very same dynamism, two modes of experiencing the same life: that is, there was an implicit recognition of the unity existing between them.” Megyer, “Theological Trends,” p. 58.

⁵⁰ See Sheldrake, in the introduction in *NSCM*.

reach beyond oneself in relationship to others. Thus, spirituality is a developed relationality to self, others, the world, and the Transcendent.⁵¹ In this sense, spirituality is closely related to Christian anthropology since being spiritual involves one's full human dimensions.⁵²

2.4.2 Spirituality as Lived Experience

This affirms that spirituality is not a set of doctrines or simply a set of practices but an ongoing experience of life project whose very purpose is life integration.⁵³ From such an understanding, it is clear that spirituality places emphasis on holistic involvement⁵⁴ of persons and therefore the spiritual practices, prayer and even socio-political commitments are important. Moreover, spirituality is a personal project involving the uniqueness and individual initiative, different from the earlier understanding that laid emphasis on the more or less uniform behavioural application of Church doctrines.

Spirituality is not an abstract idea, a theory, an ideology, or a movement of some kind. It is personal-lived reality that has both active and passive dimensions. Second, spirituality is an experience of *conscious involvement in a project*, which means that it is neither an accidental experience such as the result of a drug overdose, nor an episodic event such as being overwhelmed by a beautiful sunset. It is not a collection of practices such as saying certain prayers, rubbing crystals, or going to church. It is an ongoing and coherent approach to life as a consciously pursued and ongoing enterprise.⁵⁵

Spirituality, when taken as lived experience, is also a project of life integration that focuses on self-transcendence, "Third, spirituality is a project of life-integration, which means that it is holistic, involving body and spirit, emotions and thought, activity and passivity, social and individual aspects of life. It is an effort to bring all of life together in an integrated synthesis of ongoing growth and development. Spirituality, then, involves one's whole life in relation to reality as a whole."⁵⁶

⁵¹ Cf. Sandra M. Schneiders, "Religion and Spirituality: Strangers, Rivals, or Partners?" *The Santa Clara Lectures* (Public Lecture at Santa Clara University delivered on February 6, 2000), vol. 6 no. 2, pp. 1-33, here p. 3. See also, an earlier version of it in *Horizons* 13 (1986) pp. 265-267.

⁵² The anthropological, socio-cultural elements are important in such considerations. For more on these see Gamarra, *Teología espiritual*, pp. 39ff.

⁵³ See Schneiders, "Christian Spirituality," p. 1.

⁵⁴ By holistic we mean the involvement of body, spirit, mind, human nature, emotion, gender and so on. See *ibid.*

⁵⁵ Schneiders, "Religion and Spirituality," p. 5.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

The project of life-integration is pursued by constant *self-transcendence toward ultimate value*,⁵⁷ which means that spirituality is positive in its direction. This openness towards the infinite takes place not without, but within a community context and calls for commitment. And we are concerned about such action and commitment, and this makes us study morality and spirituality.

2.4.3 Spirituality as Academic Discipline

As an academic discipline, spirituality studies the Christian spirituality as lived reality. Earlier, terms like spiritual theology or mystical theology were utilized to refer to it, and today spirituality assumes all these senses.⁵⁸ Today spirituality in the academy refers to the discipline that studies the lived experience and it analyses it by studying the forms, foundations and different methods employed in research.⁵⁹ As a result of decades of research, starting especially in the post-Conciliar Church, scholars define spirituality as ‘the field of study which attempts to investigate in an interdisciplinary way spiritual experience as such.’⁶⁰ Since this discipline is interested in the experience as experience, in its phenomenological wholeness, the approach is interdisciplinary, and descriptive-critical rather than prescriptive-normative discipline. In the same way, spirituality is also ecumenical, interreligious, and cross-cultural when it refers to Christian spirituality in general.

Though in academic discipline spirituality is also often termed as holistic⁶¹ – where the inquiry is not limited to human spiritual experience that are explicitly religious – but

⁵⁷ The focus of self-transcendence is value that the person perceives as ultimate not only in relation to oneself but in some objective sense.

⁵⁸ In analysing the section on the term spirituality, we have seen how in the 20th century this term gained prominence. See also Walter H. Principe, “Toward Defining Spirituality,” in *Studies in Religion/ Sciences Religieuses* 12 (1983) pp. 127-141.

⁵⁹ The three forms are Lay Spirituality, Schools of Spirituality, and Countermovement. The foundational research is in the areas of Spirituality in the light of praxis, Spirituality viewed from within the discipline, Divine-human transformation: the object of research, Discernment, and Plan for the discipline of spirituality. The methods of research are descriptive method, hermeneutic method, systematic method, and mystagogic method. Kees Waaijman, *Spirituality: Forms, Foundations, Methods*, Leuven: Peeters, 2002, pp. 7ff.

⁶⁰ Schneiders, “Spirituality in the Academy,” p. 692.

⁶¹ In holistic discipline, the psychological, bodily, historical, social, political, aesthetic, intellectual, and other dimensions of the human subject of spiritual experience are integral to that experience insofar as it is the subject matter of the discipline of spirituality. Cf. *ibid.*

our focus is on the interior life, i.e. what pertains specifically to Christian experience. Since there is no generic spirituality, but rather particular spirituality, we are dealing with an explicitly religious spirituality in which the horizon of ultimate value is the triune God revealed in Jesus Christ, in whose life we share through the gift of the Holy Spirit. What is specific to Christian spirituality would be God, Trinity, Christ, Holy Spirit, Church, sacraments and so on. Then, “Christian spirituality is the life of faith, hope, and love within the community of the Church through which we put on the mind of Christ by participating sacramentally and existentially in his paschal mystery. The desired life-integration is personal transformation in Christ, which implies participation in the transformation of the world in justice for all creatures.”⁶² As a theological discipline, then, spirituality focuses on Christian spiritual experiences and the ways in which such experiences are made to integrate into life. Thus, in our work we would be considering spirituality not merely from an academic perspective, rather from the human dimension, focusing on the lived experience.

2.5 The General Notion of Morality

We have seen that spirituality has undergone many interpretations and its self-understanding is now founded on experience of God, Spirit-filled life and living in concrete situations. In the following pages we outline, first the historical happenings around moral theology and subsequently explore the newer dimension of morality, with the hope that we can identify meeting points of these two disciplines. The separation of moral theology from spirituality over the centuries did much damage to life of Christians and yet the recent developments in moral theology and spirituality point to a different horizon.

2.5.1 Moral Theology: Historical Beginnings

The history of moral theology itself is a recent interest⁶³ and yet it goes as far back as the scripture to find its roots. Most authors who deal with the history identify Patristic

⁶² Schneiders, “Religion and Spirituality,” p. 6.

⁶³ Many authors point out that a special interest in the history of moral theology began in the mid-twentieth century. “La storia della teologia morale è una disciplina alquanto giovane; al suo sorgere ha contribuito in maniera determinante il recente rinnovamento di questa disciplina: rinnovamento che ha reso urgente la consapevolezza del dinamismo proprio della morale cristiana – e umana in generale – e quindi ha creato lo spazio logico per la considerazione della storia.” Giuseppe Angelini – Ambrogio Valsecchi, *Disegno*

era, Middle Ages, Modernity and twentieth century as significant periods.⁶⁴ We focus on the Middle Ages where most of the developments related to morality seem to have begun as well as in a context where our study finds its originating source.

The making of moral theology is intimately linked to mandatory auricular confession that began with the Fourth Lateran Council in the thirteenth century. Personal acknowledgement of sins has powerfully influenced Christian morality, prompting many to term confession as the single most influential factor in the development of moral theology.⁶⁵ The gradual admission and leading later to the requirement of the frequent penance is termed as ‘one of the most remarkable transformation in the history of Church discipline.’⁶⁶ The historical review on the growth of auricular confession, which we have seen in detail later in the previous section, reveals how the developments around this practice of confession influenced morality. We can identify three ways in which confession has influenced moral theology, namely a preoccupation with sin, a concentration on the individual and an obsession with law.⁶⁷ Many would point out that the confessional doctrine and moral theology took seriously the moral vulnerability of believers and not just humans in their weakness but more in their awareness of weakness and helplessness. At the same time, a strong sense of sin and guilt also was inculcated through blunt tariff gradations of the Penitentials, the casuistry and moral theology.⁶⁸

storico della teologia morale, Bologna: EDB, 1972, p. 11. See also Julio Luis Martínez - José Manuel Caamaño, *Moral fundamental*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 2014, pp. 145-148.

⁶⁴ See for example Martínez - Caamaño, *Moral fundamental*, pp. 193ff; See also Lieve Vereecke, *Estudios sobre historia de la moral*, Madrid: PS, 1969, pp. 65-66.

⁶⁵ “To begin a historical study of the making of moral theology with an examination of the influence of auricular confession may appear to some an intriguing, and to others an attractive prospect; but however one regards it there is no doubt that the single most influential factor in the development of the practice and of the discipline of moral theology is to be found in the growth and spread of ‘confession’ in the Church.” John Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of the Roman Catholic Tradition*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, p. 1.

⁶⁶ See John T. McNeill, *A History of the Care of Souls*, London, 1952, p. 93, as quoted in Mahoney, *The Making*, p. 1.

⁶⁷ Cf. Mahoney, *The Making*, p. 27.

⁶⁸ “It was the Church’s growing tradition of moral theology which was itself heavily responsible for increasing men’s weakness and moral apprehension, with the strong sense of sin and guilt which it so thoroughly strove to inculcate or reinforce, and the humiliations and punishments with which it drove its message home. The pessimistic anthropology from which it started, and which served inevitably to confirm and reinforce itself [...] drove moral theology increasingly to concern itself almost exclusively with the darker and insubordinate side of human existence. The miasma of sin which emanates from the penitential literature and from the vast majority of manual of moral theology is not only distasteful, but profoundly disquieting.” *Ibid.*, p. 28. Also Martínez - Caamaño, *Moral fundamental*, p. 216.

Though the whole approach of moral theology was to help the faithful in identifying and solving the spiritual ailments, the effect was quite opposite. The exaggerated and isolated process of focusing only on one aspect of life, without considering the integrated and holistic view of persons, lead to further compartmentalization as notes Mahoney:

as a consequence of this commitment to spiritual pathology, the discipline of moral theology was to relinquish almost all consideration of the good in man to other branches of theology, notably to what became known as spiritual theology. But inevitably this study of Christian perfection was pursued in a rarified and elitist atmosphere more suited to those few who aspired to the life of the counsels, particularly in the religious orders, than to those laity in the world who would, it was considered, find it sufficiently challenging and formidable to attain even to salvation by observance of the Ten Commandments. Even when the works of moral theology did adopt schemes, not of sins against the commandments of God and of the Church (as also in the popular catechisms), but of the moral and theological virtues, [...] these were still too often seen as remedies for sinful vices, or as alternative moral yardsticks against which to measure the infinite variety of moral delinquency.⁶⁹

The great preoccupation with sin is also reflected in meticulous dissection of subject matters like nature of sin, role of ignorance and passions in the moral judgement, full knowledge and full consent, and so on. Neither the meticulous theories nor the tendency to punish even accidents lead the penitent to assume moral responsibility for one's actions. The emphasis of the Fourth Lateran Council on diligent enquiry about all the circumstances of a sin, Trent's stress on the confessor's duty to explain the circumstances of various sins in order to help the penitent in the future, and lack of moral information, and so on lead to a passive sense of self-mistrust.⁷⁰

The regular occurrence of the term 'diligence' in the tradition is related to such an outlook as Mahoney points out many instances. In the Penitential of Columban in the seventh century, the term appears as an impersonal observation that confessions should be made 'with some diligence' while in Adomnan's life of Columba of Iona the call to interrogate a serious sinner 'rather diligently.' The Fourth Lateran Council stressed the need to enquire 'diligently' the circumstances but the Council of Trent passed the responsibility

⁶⁹ Mahoney, *The Making*, p. 29.

⁷⁰ It was the catechism after the Council of Trent stresses the confessor's duty of exhaustive explanation of circumstances. See *ibid.*, p. 30.

to the penitent by saying it was the duty of penitent of a diligent reflection.⁷¹ The Roman Catechism urged an ‘utmost care and diligence’ and then the 1917 Code of Canon Law made it an obligation of the penitent a ‘diligent self-examination.’ Some point out that the requirement of completeness or integrity in relating one’s mortal sins as well as the obsession with species, number and circumstances of sins made moral responsibility for venial sins secondary and subsequently pushing it into oblivion. The detailed enquiry in ‘every nooks and shadows of conscience’ for completeness was another aspect of confession that would influence morality in a definite way.⁷² Thus, we see that the developments in confessional practices directly influenced the course of morality and moral theology.

Yet another aspect that has marked the progress of the moral teaching of the Church is the concentration on the individual at the cost of neglecting the collective responsibility. In other words, excessive individualism dominated the teaching and only recently there is focus on social teachings. “It is an approach to ‘social justice’ in which the influence of confession has led to a concentration on individuals and a reluctance to ‘exonerate’ them by recognizing a more social meaning to sin and an element of sinfulness in institutions, or, indeed, in social circumstances.”⁷³ Another characteristic of the development of moral theology we said was the obsession with law. The language of lawcourt is indeed a part of the imagery when talking about God’s dealings with people and the same imagery, with its limitations, was employed to talk about the sacrament of reconciliation. The over-systematization of such system, comparing the confession to the judicial, and legal approach to morality all have led to view sin as above all a transgression of law.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 30-31. See also Peter Godman, *Paradoxes of Conscience in the High Middle Ages: Abelrad, Heloise, and the Archpoet*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 53ff; Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, p. 16.

⁷² Mahoney observes that obsession on mortal sins and the resistance of extending the practice of general absolution led to a “mentality disposed to discount sins which were not mortal, but ‘only venial’, even if it was concerned with the valid enough question of degrees of seriousness, and therefore of moral responsibility. But perhaps more significantly, it led also to an approach to the moral life as discontinuous; ‘freezing’ the film in a jerky succession of individual ‘stills’ to be analysed, and ignoring the plot. Continuity was discounted, or at most only a ‘circumstance’, and the ‘story’ of the individual’s moral vocation and exploration either unsuspected or disregarded.” Mahoney, *The Making*, p. 31.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁷⁴ See *ibid.*, p. 35.

3 Morality and Spirituality: Separated Siblings

We could capture the entire ambit of morality-spirituality relation in a single phrase as ‘morality without spirituality is rootless; spirituality without morality is disembodied.’⁷⁵ Having seen the meaning of spirituality and its historical development, we took note that moral theology and hence morality in general are intimately linked to the development of confessional practices. We have seen that moral theology had occupied itself with act-centred analysis and this overemphasis on action put morality on the risk of losing its soul. Moral theology developed as a distinct discipline after the Council of Trent and was primarily oriented toward assisting priests in hearing confessions. Moral theology came to existence as an independent discipline in 1600, with the publication of *Institutiones Morales* by Juan Azor,⁷⁶ and it was separate from dogmatic theology, dedicating exclusively to confession. The act-centred orientation confined moral thinking more to determine which actions were sins or not and to resolve conflicts of obligations according to the objective principles of natural law. Meanwhile, spirituality was concerned more about religious experience and growth in virtue through faith.

Notwithstanding the inertia of history and tradition, morality was put back together with spirituality as a result of many events as Richard Gula reiterates: “the personalist turn in philosophy and theology that gave us the renewed theology of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) inaugurated a revised moral theology that continues to work out the implications of making a shift from a morality of acts governed by norms toward a personal and social morality governed by the integration of a virtuous life under the guidance of inner presence of the Holy Spirit.”⁷⁷ The Vatican Council had clearly called for renewal when it said, “likewise let the other theological disciplines be renewed through a more living contact with the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation. Special care must be given to the perfecting of moral theology. Its scientific exposition, nourished more on the teaching of the Bible, should shed light on the loftiness of the calling of the faithful in

⁷⁵ See Richard M. Gula, “Morality and Spirituality,” in James Keating (ed.), *Moral Theology: New Directions and Fundamental Issues*, New York: Paulist Press, 2004, pp. 162-177, here p. 162.

⁷⁶ Cf. Vereecke, *Estudios sobre historia*, p. 66.

⁷⁷ Gula, “Morality and Spirituality,” p. 162.

Christ and the obligation that is theirs of bearing fruit in charity for the life of the world.”⁷⁸ Undoubtedly, the paradigm shift took place with the publication of *The Law of Christ* by Bernard Häring⁷⁹ that interpreted moral theology from the perspective of one’s spiritual response to the call of God in Christ and through the Spirit. This call-response structure of the moral life and the centrality of conversion and discipleship make it possible to bridge the gap between spirituality and morality.⁸⁰ Häring’s insight, that the dynamics of spiritual experience contain the moral impulse to pass on what has been experienced, is important in understanding how spirituality and morality are interconnected. Häring rightly emphasized the priority of love over law and it would not be unjust to say that he pioneered the morality-spirituality convergence.

The history of centuries of separated existence taught that when morality and spirituality are held in separate spheres of life, the moral life is reduced to sins or individual acts of virtue in specific areas of life – business dealings, sexual relations, making life-and-death decisions, and so on. Then morality was looked at as a set of rules or principles that had to be just applied in order to decide the right way to act – in other words, morality dealt with individual acts, with clearly defined rules or principles for direct action, when the nobler life was left to spirituality and to a selected elite.⁸¹ Morality grew in closer alliance with canon law and spirituality was confined to monasteries. However, life cannot be compartmentalized and the problem is well articulated by Gula when he says: “one’s spirituality cannot be reduced to one’s discipline of prayer, so the moral life cannot be reduced to acts or summed up in the decisions we make and the justifications we give to support the way we solve our problems. Our ability to identify a problem, and even more to solve it, is a measure of who we are and how we live in the meantime.”⁸² Developments

⁷⁸ *OT*, 16.

⁷⁹ Bernard Häring, *The Law of Christ* 3 vols., Maryland: The Newman Press, 1964; Spanish edition: *La ley de Cristo*, 3 vols., Barcelona: Herder, 1968.

⁸⁰ Enda McDonagh talks of the need to distinguish between ‘theology of morality’ and moral theology arguing that theology of morality is about “the moral analyst who is also a Christian believer must confront his analysis with his Christian faith and see how far they illustrate, cohere with and confirm each other or are even intrinsically linked.” Enda McDonagh, “Morality and Spirituality,” *Studia Moralia* 15 (1977) pp. 121-137, here p. 124.

⁸¹ Cf. Richard M. Gula, *The Good Life: Where Morality and Spirituality Converge*, New York: Paulist Press, 1999, p. 4.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

in both spirituality and morality in recent years orient to a renewal and subsequently to closing the gap between the two, and there is finding of much in common to create humanity that is reconciled to itself and in search of perfection and happiness.⁸³ This would take us to explore the common ground that exist between morality and spirituality in order to situate better the convergence of the two.

3.1 Unity in Diversity

Human experience tends to be governed by two laws namely unity and diversity, each of which have different functions in order to maintain the integrity of human existence. The existence of only one element, either diversity or unity, would frustrate life: exaggerated diversity leads to total dispersion while unity would perpetuate rigidity.⁸⁴ The renewal in moral theology, especially after the Vatican Council II, acknowledges that morality has a spiritual core and that spirituality cannot be separated from moral living. This is the result of a reiteration that moral life is born out of spirituality. Love of God is the foundation of moral life. “Spirituality asks, “do you love me?” The spiritual life is born in the unquenchable desire to be loved. The heart burning with desire wants to be desired back by the fact that for which it longs. Spirituality expresses this urgent longing by connecting us with what we ultimately love as the source of ultimate meaning in our life.”⁸⁵

The unity in diversity of morality and spirituality is made possible by the common source of theology: “las dos dimensiones nacen de la vida teologal, se nutren de ella y convergen hacia ella. La vida teologal viene a representar la unidad de la experiencia en la vida cristiana.”⁸⁶ There is unity because each and every Christian is called to be holy, and there are multiple ways to live such vocation: “La espiritualidad consiste en una vida guiada por el Espíritu del Hijo y del Padre; la acción ética es un comportamiento inspirado por este mismo Espíritu. En esta vida nueva, la espiritualidad se hace compromiso ético y la moral

⁸³ See for example Marciano Vidal, *Nueva Moral Fundamental: El hogar teológico de la ética*, Bilbao: DDB, 2000, pp. 887ff. for a detailed discussion on this relation.

⁸⁴ See Marciano Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad: de la separación a la convergencia*, Madrid: PS, 1997, p. 5.

⁸⁵ Gula, “Morality and Spirituality,” p. 164.

⁸⁶ Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 19.

es motivada por la coherencia con esta experiencia espiritual. La acción ética es justamente un estilo de vida coherente y consecuente con la vida de gracia recibida.”⁸⁷

There is unity in diversity between morality and spirituality because “la espiritualidad y la ética cristiana brotan de la misma experiencia de Dios en el camino hacia la santidad, que consiste en una vida de caridad (amar a Dios en el otro y el otro en Dios), según la vocación particular de cada uno.”⁸⁸

3.1.1 Autonomy of Each Discipline

Moral theologians just as scholars in spirituality agree that there is unity among these two fields, yet without confusion of each one’s autonomy. The two dimensions of Christian life are born from and find their sustenance from theology; they tend toward a convergence, and thus theology represents a unity in Christian life. The similarity and the convergence among the two disciplines however does not rule out the autonomy of each discipline, as Vidal points out: “esta autonomía es de doble signo: por una parte, se refiere a la peculiaridad de cada una de las dimensiones (y, por tanto, la autonomía entre ellas); por otra, guarda relación con la vida teologal en su conjunto, en cuanto que tanto la espiritualidad como, sobre todo, la moral tienen su significado “autónomo” que no puede ser suprimido por su articulación dentro de la vida teologal.”⁸⁹ The autonomy of spirituality consists in its preference and exclusivity⁹⁰ for transcendence, interiority and verticality, while moral theology prefers horizontality, with its focus on the immanent dimension articulating more exteriority. Moreover, the dialogue with general ethics fall under the ambit of morality, as Castro points out: “En este caso la moral ha de utilizar la racionalidad humana para articular la vida de fe. Por su parte, la espiritualidad trenzaría su discurso

⁸⁷ Tony Mifsud, “Una mística de la acción. La implicación mutua entre ética y espiritualidad,” in *Proyección* 50/208 (2003) pp. 7-23, here p. 8.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁸⁹ Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 19.

⁹⁰ When we say autonomy, it refers to a preference and not an exclusivity. Thus, spirituality has verticality or morality a horizontality, but the preference of direction marks the peculiarity. Such preference ensures demarcation of contents, objects, etc. of each field. Cf. Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 20. See also Marciano Vidal, “Teología moral y teología espiritual: dos disciplinas teológicas “autónomas” y “complementarias,”” en *Revista Española de Teología* 57 (1997) pp. 51-77.

desde la misma fe, con pocas connotaciones con la racionalidad, situándonos prácticamente fuera de este ámbito.”⁹¹

The autonomy that morality enjoys, much more than spirituality, asserts the fact that the basic human elements of rationality play important roles. Christian morality, while relies on human wisdom, adheres to a faith-based rationality and thus has a ‘paradigma de moral de la autonomía teónoma’ [theonomy autonomy,] i.e. “la vida moral del cristiano se sitúa en un contexto de fe. La vida teologal es la que contextualiza el obrar y la reflexión de los creyentes en el campo de la moral [...]. Aun situada en el contexto de fe, la vida moral cristiana [...] no pierde la autonomía que les corresponde en cuanto ética humana.”⁹² This affirms that in the moral life of Christians, rationality is indispensable and human autonomy is respected.⁹³

Mifsud also talks of this different approach with the same goal to offer a verticality and another dimension of horizontality, in the following way:

Esta mutua implicancia entre teología espiritual y la ética cristiana no desconoce la peculiaridad de los dos enfoques o perspectivas en la lectura de la misma y única experiencia fundante del creyente. Así, la espiritualidad privilegia la verticalidad (la relación con el Transcendente) mediante la interioridad (el proceso de la conversión), mientras la moral mira preferentemente la horizontalidad (la realidad como historia) mediante el camino de la exterioridad (el proceso de la transformación de la realidad).⁹⁴

Therefore, the themes that spirituality and morality deal with are different: spirituality reflects on the process of growth in the life of faith while morality tends toward an actuation of history. With regard to methodology, the difference lies in the use of different resources: spirituality relies on anthropology and psychology while morality makes use of social sciences to better grasp the human reality.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Secundino Castro, “Espiritualidad y moral,” in *Revista de Espiritualidad* 57 (1998) pp. 273-279, here p. 275.

⁹² Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 22.

⁹³ Vidal points out that in Christian morality, rationality is indispensable: “en la vida moral del cristiano es indispensable el recurso a la racionalidad humana: ni la vida teologal ni la espiritualidad suplen el necesario esfuerzo por indagar la verdad de los intrincados problemas morales de hoy [...]. El cristiano, en su actuación moral ha de respetar la autonomía de lo humano tratando de articular en ella las referencias cristianas.” *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Mifsud, “Una mística,” p. 9.

⁹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

3.1.2 Theology as the Common Ground for Spirituality and Morality

Theology forms the common ground for a relation between morality and spirituality.⁹⁶ The renewal and new dimension of moral theology has affirmed that there exists a necessary and inseparable relation between spirituality and morality: “es en la vida teologal donde la espiritualidad y la moral tienen una identidad sustancial [...]. Tanto la Teología moral como la Teología dogmática de hoy afirman con fuerza la sustancial identidad de la vida moral con la experiencia teologal.”⁹⁷ For Häring, moral life and Moral Theology have the same structure as that of Christian life and Theology in general when he sustained that “toda la perspectiva de la teología moral sigue la estructura básica de la fe cristiana.”⁹⁸ Such a relation between morality and spirituality finds the source in the Spirit as “esta relación no se da tan sólo a nivel de complementariedad sino, muy especialmente, en el sentido de una mutua e indisoluble implicancia, ya que una ética que se dice cristiana encuentra su fuente en el Espíritu y, a la vez, una espiritualidad de talante cristiano se hace auténtica en la expresión concreta de un estilo de vida.”⁹⁹ There is unanimity among moral theologians, dogmatic as well as spiritual theologians about such relation between moral living and spiritual life.¹⁰⁰

Such intimate relation is possible, as notes Vidal, because morality and spirituality have the same bedrock of theology by way of identical contents, same theological categories and identical dynamism.¹⁰¹ The identical content consists on the fact that the

⁹⁶ Arzubialde says, “la espiritualidad es la *cara subjetiva* de la Dogmática, eso es, la Palabra de Dios tal como es percibida y tal como se despliega en la Iglesia, en la unidad incondicionada del único y mismo sujeto, que es la Iglesia.” Santiago Arzubialde, *Theologia spiritualis*, Madrid: UPCo, 1989, p. 20.

⁹⁷ Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 11.

⁹⁸ Bernard Häring, *Libertad y fidelidad en Cristo* vol. I, as quoted in *ibid.*

⁹⁹ Mifsud, “Una mística,” p. 7.

¹⁰⁰ Vidal also cites examples of post-conciliar moral theologians like J. Fuchs and F. Boeckle; among theologians, F. X. Durrwell, Karl Rahner, H. U. Von Balthasar and E. Schillebeeckx are the better-known ones. See Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, pp. 11-12.

¹⁰¹ “Esta unanimidad en el pensamiento teológico actual descansa sobre un conjunto de evidencias que agrupo en torno a tres núcleos temáticos: idéntico *contenido*, idénticas *categorías teológicas*, idéntico *dinamismo*.” *Ibid.*, p. 12. The content is the call to holiness, while theological categories are Trinitarian life, Christological reference, and vivifying presence of the Spirit. The identical dynamism that Vidal refers to is the theological virtues.

evangelical call to perfection is not limited to a select few; on the contrary, it is a vocation of all – the universal call to holiness, as the Council affirms:

therefore in the Church, everyone whether belonging to the hierarchy, or being cared for by it, is called to holiness, according to the saying of the Apostle: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification”. However, this holiness of the Church is unceasingly manifested, and must be manifested, in the fruits of grace which the Spirit produces in the faithful; it is expressed in many ways in individuals, who in their walk of life, tend toward the perfection of charity, thus causing the edification of others.¹⁰²

This would imply that there is no more difference between laity and religious in following God– there is no more minimum or maximum morality: “ya no se trata de una moral del mínimo para laicos y una espiritualidad del máximo para la vida religiosa, sino una espiritualidad y una moral que constituyen distintas expresiones de la misma vocación común a todos los cristianos.”¹⁰³ From such an affirmation, it follows that morality and spirituality are not two different levels as was held erroneously earlier i.e. spirituality as meant for religious life, with its evangelical counsels that would pave the way for perfection, and morality for the laity, with its minimum requirements of complying with the Ten Commandments.

The universal call to holiness underlines also the fact that morality and spirituality are two expressions of the same experience: “The classes and duties of life are many, but holiness is one—that sanctity which is cultivated by all who are moved by the Spirit of God, [...]. Every person must walk unhesitatingly according to his own personal gifts and duties in the path of living faith.”¹⁰⁴ This same idea is put forth by Pope John Paul II when he says,

this vocation to perfect love is not restricted to a small group of individuals. The invitation, “go, sell your possessions and give the money to the poor,” and the promise “you will have a treasure in heaven,” are meant for everyone, because they bring out the full meaning of the commandment of love for neighbour, just as the invitation which follows, “Come, follow me,” is the new, specific form of the commandment of love of God. Both the commandments and Jesus’ invitation to the rich young man stand at the service of a single and indivisible charity, which spontaneously tends towards that perfection whose measure is God alone: “You, therefore, must be perfect, as your

¹⁰² *LG* 39.

¹⁰³ Mifsud, “Una mística,” p. 7.

¹⁰⁴ *LG* 41.

heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt 5:48). In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus makes even clearer the meaning of this perfection: “Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful” (Lk 6:36).¹⁰⁵

The intrinsic and unbreakable bond between faith and morality¹⁰⁶ confirms that there exists a common ground for spirituality and morality, i.e. experience of God. This experience of God – reflected upon as theology – thus becomes the common source in this convergence.¹⁰⁷

Another way of looking at the common ground is from the perspective of God experience. Spirituality and morality, thus, spring forth from the same experience – the experience of walking the path of perfection. Because “every believer is called to be a follower of Christ (cf. Acts 6:1). Following Christ is thus the essential and primordial foundation of Christian morality.”¹⁰⁸ Following of Christ then means to ‘hold fast to the very person of Jesus’ or having the same mentality that Christ had (cf. Phil. 2:5). We find the same affirmation in Mifsud when he says “la experiencia (espiritualidad) se hace compromiso (ética) y el compromiso (ética) es fruto de la experiencia (espiritualidad).”¹⁰⁹ This is because, “la moral como la espiritualidad no pueden ser otra cosa que la articulación de la fe en la dimensión de la ciencia o de la vida, según los casos, sobre campos concretos del existir humano.”¹¹⁰

Affirming theology as the common source Castro argues, “aunque en sus dimensiones extremas la moral y la espiritualidad parecen dos realidades totalmente diferentes, a partir de la nueva visión de la moral las coincidencias de fondo con la vida espiritual son claras. Se refieren a una misma vida, que surge de la Trinidad, se expresa en Cristo, y utilizan el mismo camino para conseguirla: las virtudes teologales.”¹¹¹ And, it is the very identity of humans that becomes the starting point of theology and hence that of

¹⁰⁵ VS, n. 18.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., n. 4.

¹⁰⁷ Bernard points out that moral theology and spirituality have the same object, of human existence, but approach it differently. Both are concerned of holiness though through different means. See Bernard, *Teología espiritual*, pp. 76ff.

¹⁰⁸ VS, n. 19.

¹⁰⁹ Mifsud, “Una mística,” p. 9.

¹¹⁰ Castro, “Espiritualidad y moral,” p. 274.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

morality and spirituality. Man and woman are made in the image of God and from this flows our dignity; our dignity comes from our relationship with God, prior to any achievement. Human dignity is fundamentally a relational reality – relation with God and with fellow humans. “Human dignity is the fundamental basis of all morality. Without heartfelt grasp of the inherent dignity of persons, there would be no morality at all. We act morally in the first place because we believe that everybody is a somebody who ought to be respected and treated as such.”¹¹²

Talking about experience of God, Gula affirms that what makes morality and spirituality possible is the basic human orientation toward God as the source, support and goal of our deepest desires and this fundamental openness to God from the beginning is an imprint of the Holy Spirit on the human spirit and this makes morality and spirituality possible. We are made in love for love and we are always receiving God’s spirit and communicating our response to that gift in all that we do. Our spiritual practices then are expressions of our desire to surrender to God’s love for us, and our moral life of virtue is about living out of the abundance of being so loved.¹¹³

As we have noted, since experience pertains largely to spirituality and Christian spirituality is centred on the experience of God loving us, it is in this very experience of God that spirituality and morality are related. The experience of God and union with God will have great influence; that is to say, whether we experience God and how we experience God will influence our spirituality and moral life. This is important because a morality that rises out of spirituality asks what kind of God we experience and what differences it makes. This is true because the kind of image we have of God is related to our vision of life and values. Images of God evoke corresponding affections that dispose us to act in certain ways, so the images we have of God do play an important role in the way we live our lives.

Since experiencing God stands at the centre of spirituality and morality, it is crucial to live with an awareness of God’s presence in all experiences as well as to seek deeper communion with God in and through all that one does. From such a point of view, Gula

¹¹² Gula, *The Good Life*, p. 15.

¹¹³ See Gula, “Morality and Spirituality,” p. 167.

rightly affirms interrelatedness saying, “spirituality and morality cannot be kept alive by rational argument of even the support of popular opinion. We need a personal experience of God loving in and through the people and events of our lives. When we experience this love, we feel the moral tug to care about what God cares about. This is morality giving public expression to one’s spirituality.”¹¹⁴

Further, discipleship by imitating Jesus will be a manifestation of one’s spirituality and morality. And such discipleship indeed relates God becoming human in Jesus to all of human life which involves one’s spiritual practices. Spiritual practice without corresponding moral living is the sign of a dead spirituality and so we can affirm that spiritual practices should bring about a heightened sensitivity to one’s moral responsibilities, and moral living should help return to spiritual practices. This reciprocal relationship of spiritual practices and the moral life affirms the inseparability of the love of God and love of neighbour.¹¹⁵ This same relation can be expressed as “la moral cristiana fundada sobre el mandamiento del amor no se agota ni puede agotarse únicamente en el cumplimiento de las prescripciones de la ley, [...]. Es decir, la vida cristiana no está constituida en primer lugar por la mera conformidad con unas normas éticas, sino fundamentalmente por una orientación de la libertad humana suscitada por la acogida de la salvación de Dios en Jesucristo.”¹¹⁶ Here we see that having a common source in theology calls for greater confluence.

3.1.3 Trintiy as the Source

We have already referred to theology being the common source of spirituality and morality and such renewal based on this common source brings about a new outlook. Specifically, it is the Godhead that becomes the source of all renewal. The very existence of the Church is in the Trinity,¹¹⁷ and we could say this same eternal mystery is displayed in the form of spirituality and morality. “La Trinidad es para la moral no solo un

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 171.

¹¹⁵ See ibid., pp. 172-173. See what Bernard says about the authentic action being founded on a solid foundation of prayer in Bernard, *Teología espiritual*, pp. 514ff.

¹¹⁶ Julio L. Martínez, *Moral social y espiritualidad: una co(i)nspiración necesaria*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 2011, p. 134.

¹¹⁷ Cf. *LG*, nos. 2, 3 & 4.

‘paradigma’ de comportamiento sino también, y sobre todo, el ‘fundamento’ del obrar moral.”¹¹⁸

Trinity is the foundation and model of moral behaviour, since humans are created in the image and likeness of God who is Father-Son-Holy Spirit. God by nature is relational and being made in the image of God implies we are made social by nature and are made to share. “God is love” is elaborated in the doctrine of the Trinity which tells that “the God in whose image we are made is a community of persons radically equal to each other while absolutely mutual in self-giving and receiving [...] a profound community of equal persons bonded in mutual relations.”¹¹⁹ To be made in the image of God is not only a gift but also a responsibility. We are called as images of God to live out of the fulness of the gifts we have received; receiving and giving are the dynamic movement of morality and spirituality.¹²⁰ The same affirmation is seen in Vatican Council which affirmed that the very existence of humans is relational.¹²¹

Such reconstruction of self-understanding of the two disciplines permits a convergence of spirituality and morality and an ethics motivated by spirituality would reorient its own course. In such case, moral theologians would identify three characteristics namely Trinitarian morality, following of Christ, and morality of gratitude.¹²² The recent attempt to recover the Trinitarian roots of Christian morality and “a veces utilizando la vida trinitaria como “paradigma” para construir el “ethos” de la sociedad, de las relaciones interpersonales, de la familia, etc. Otras veces, en un sentido más profundo, para proporcionar a la vida moral su necesaria estructura trinitaria apoyándola sobre ese misterio fontal de la fe cristiana.”¹²³

¹¹⁸ Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 14.

¹¹⁹ Gula, *The Good Life*, p. 16.

¹²⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹²¹ “As God did not create man for life in isolation, but for the formation of social unity, so also "it has pleased God to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals, without bond or link between them, but by making them into a single people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness."(13) So from the beginning of salvation history He has chosen men not just as individuals but as members of a certain community. Revealing His mind to them, God called these chosen ones "His people" (Ex. 3:7-12), and even made a covenant with them on Sinai.” *GS*, 32.

¹²² ‘Una moral trinitaria, una moral del seguimiento de Cristo y una moral de la gratitud,’ Mifsud, “Una mística,” p. 14.

¹²³ Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 15.

3.1.4 Christological and Pneumatological Roots

Morality is an outcome of the encounter with Christ and Mifsud reiterates this same point when he says “la ética en términos del seguimiento de Cristo subraya, por una parte, su *radicalidad* (el dejarse cuestionar por la práctica de Jesús), y por otra, su talante *dialogal* (el seguimiento como fruto de un encuentro con Jesús el Cristo). Por consiguiente, la Persona de Jesús el Cristo es el contenido y la motivación del obrar del discípulo.”¹²⁴

Following Christ implies being conformed to him, being transformed internally through the work of the Holy Spirit, what Vidal terms as ‘la vida espiritual es un vivir *en* Cristo, y consiguientemente, *como* Cristo.’¹²⁵ Such following implies already a spirituality, an actualization of the Spirit in our lives:

following Christ is not an outward imitation, since it touches man at the very depths of his being. Being a follower of Christ means becoming conformed to him who became a servant even to giving himself on the Cross (cf. Phil 2:5-8). Christ dwells by faith in the heart of the believer (cf. Eph. 3:17), and thus the disciple is conformed to the Lord. This is the effect of grace, of the active presence of the Holy Spirit in us.¹²⁶

The sonship forms the basis and demands solidarity precisely because this leads to fullness of life as children of God. The confession of faith in God as Father imply a lifestyle that is guided by filial conscience which itself is living the spirituality.¹²⁷ Christian spiritual life is understood in relation to the vivifying presence of the Spirit, where the spiritual path is characterized as an itinerary of the Holy Spirit in each member and as a community at large. Similarly, moral life is marked by the Spirit who guides; it is the Spirit who gives life: “through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. 8: 2).

¹²⁴ Mifsud, “Una mística,” p. 19.

¹²⁵ Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 15.

¹²⁶ VS, n. 21.

¹²⁷ “Además, la confesión de fe en el Padre Dios implica un estilo de vida guiado por la conciencia de *filiación* (vivencia espiritual) y por la práctica consecuente de la *fraternidad* (compromiso ético). La filiación fundamenta y exige la *solidaridad*, porque esta lleva a plenitud la vivencia de la filiación común (la condición de hijos fundamenta la fraternidad humana, y la vivencia de la fraternidad asume la realidad de la filiación común).” Mifsud, “Una mística,” p. 15.

3.2 The Morality-Spirituality Confluence

Changing notions of theology and the renewal of moral theology, especially having based itself on charity as the law, brought about a convergence of morality and spirituality – a confluence that results in a life that is lived as a response to the love of God.¹²⁸ Then, moral life and spiritual life converge as one begins to explore the sort of persons one ought to become and the sort of lives one ought to live in order to flourish as authentic human beings. Living in response to God’s love involves not just one aspect but the whole self, i.e. spirit, soul and body. The human spirit longs to love and to be loved, to know and to be known while the yearnings of the spirit connect to the action of the body through the soul.¹²⁹ Spirituality’s drive toward integration and morality’s response to God, engage all aspects of life and pervade the whole of a person’s identity.

Another impulse for convergence, especially after Vatican Council II, is the proximity of spirituality to morality – the rediscovery of an internal spiritual dimension in moral theology. This brought about the leaving behind a morality that was minimalist, casuist and legalist in nature and a subsequent befriending of the spiritual core of morality. Such warming up of morality to spirituality holds many implications and important among them is the renewed understanding of moral life as a dynamism oriented towards Christian perfection.¹³⁰ Such an understanding of Christian perfection involves aspects such as moral life is a ‘response’ to the call of God, that this process involves a gradual growth, that such process involves spiritual principles and that such growth is possible within a community of believers.¹³¹

¹²⁸ Richard Gula terms such life as ‘Good life’: “the good life [...] is a vocation – a response to what we hear God speak to us [...]. The relationship we establish with God in and through our responses to all things become the centre of god life [...]. Living the good life, simply put, is graced living expressing the divine love within us.” Gula, *The Good Life*, p. 3.

¹²⁹ See Gula, “Morality and Spirituality,” p. 167.

¹³⁰ “[...] la vida moral como un dinamismo sostenido y continuo hacia la perfección cristiana.” Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 25.

¹³¹ Cf. *Ibid*; VS n. 111.

Vidal observes out that a moral life from the viewpoint of ‘the interior law’ introduced by *Veritatis splendor*¹³² connects completely with spirituality since the inner law or the new law is nothing but the grace of the Holy Spirit through faith in Christ: “a través de la ‘ley nueva’ la moral cristiana conecta con la gracia: es una ‘moral de la gracia.’ La vida moral del cristiano no se mueve por normas extrínsecas sino por una fuerza interna (el Espíritu) que, transformando interiormente al creyente, le hace capaz de desear el bien y de realizarlo. En la experiencia de la ley nueva, que es gracia, la moral prácticamente se convierte en espiritualidad.”¹³³ Therefore, we can say that moral life sprouts from grace, where its source is the interiority: “la vida moral brota de la gracia. Su fuente está en la interioridad. La vida teologal, y más concretamente la vida espiritual, constituyen el origen y la fuerza del obrar moral cristiano.”¹³⁴ Thus we clearly see that spirituality is concerned with the wellspring of one’s actions. And as Gula points out “if we focus only on the actions that get done then we neglect what nourishes and sustains those actions. There is more to us, and more to life, than what we do. Our interior life affects our exterior behaviour. If we understand that the purpose of life is to live in friendship with God, then there can be no real separation of the moral and spiritual life.”¹³⁵

Mifsud points out that such a basis of morality and spirituality ensures that “el cristianismo no es primariamente una moral, sino fundamentalmente un ámbito de sentido *transcendente* (la fe) y de celebración (la esperanza) que conducen a un determinado *estilo de vida* (la caridad). Justamente, la acción ética del cristiano consiste en la mediación de este sentido último vivido en un contexto de profunda confianza en la acción del Espíritu.”¹³⁶ As we have seen, the basic human desire is oriented toward God and this fundamental openness is articulated in the convergence. The convergence takes place by living as a friend of God when “our whole life is lived in response to the love we first receive as a gift of God’s graciousness. Although every love can change us, only God’s love can change us into God’s friends. The good life is a life of friendship with God and all that God loves – ourselves, other people, and all of creation [...]. [The possibility of

¹³² Ibid., nos. 24, 45

¹³³ Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, p. 27.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Gula, *The Good Life*, pp. 3-4.

¹³⁶ Mifsud, “Una mística,” p. 10.

friendship with God] arises not in us but in the offer of God's love that makes the moral and spiritual life possible in the first place."¹³⁷

When we look at spirituality as one's awareness of being loved by God and the subsequent commitment to live in such a way to make this love real, there is greater affinity to morality precisely because moral life is born out of a relationship with God. Then we could say that moral life is born in that spiritual space where we accept God's love for us and awaken to our responsibility to care about what God cares about. The basis of link between morality and spirituality then is not obligations or laws, but rather personal relationship. "Without spirituality, morality is cut off from its core religious experience and so loses its character as a personal response to being loved by God, or being graced. Then morality easily gets reduced to occasional, dramatic moments when we have to make big decision."¹³⁸

3.2.1 Fruits of Convergence in Spirituality

Against an attitude of 'being perfect as the Father is perfect' – which insists on a lacking-nothing – moral theologians point out that evangelical call is in the context of love and being merciful: being merciful as the heavenly Father is merciful (cf. Lk. 6: 36). Such an understanding of morality would go against the attitude of self-sufficiency and self-justification that general ethics would propagate. On the contrary, "la ética cristiana se fundamenta en la coherencia agradecida y la consecuencia auténtica con el acontecimiento salvífico, es decir, un comportamiento que busca responder al amor gratuito e incondicional de Dios. La ética cristiana es una respuesta práctica de amor al don recibido."¹³⁹ This means moral behaviour is not a mere opportunity to justify oneself through complying with rule, but a necessity and a response to a God who is merciful. Then morality becomes not a momentary account of one's behaviour but a true conversion where God takes the centre stage. Thus, we can see that such understanding of morality, based on gratitude for the blessings received, intermingles with spirituality. Gratitude remembers that God is the giver

¹³⁷ Gula, *The Good Life*, p. 120.

¹³⁸ Gula, "Morality and Spirituality," pp. 164-165.

¹³⁹ Mifsud, "Una mística," p. 21.

of gifts. When we understand that “gratitude is the virtue of remembering that all comes as a gift to be shared and not as a possession to be hoarded. Gratitude looks over life, not to find what is missing, but to notice that who we are is largely the result of the handiwork of the care and support of friends.”¹⁴⁰

Another important convergence in morality and spirituality should be in a person’s character and virtue, as Gula points out:

we act the way we do largely because external conditions challenge us to reveal the habits we have formed, the beliefs we hold, the ideals we aspire to, the image we have of ourselves, and our perceptions of what is going on. We rely on our strength of character and virtuous habits to appreciate what is at stake, to distinguish the degrees of importance among values, and to discern appropriate responses to situations we face.¹⁴¹

The way one responds to life situations greatly depends on what sort of person one has become; in other words, choices one makes are related to one’s identity.¹⁴² Further, our actions become so much part of ourselves that we cannot make a clear separation of who we are from what we do. This emphasizes the importance of discerning one’s choices precisely because daily behaviour shapes our character: “perhaps the greatest predictor of how we will behave when moments of special choice come along is to be found in how we behave every day because daily behaviour shapes character. In everyday living, the way we do things affects the person we become.”¹⁴³

Thus, living in response to God’s love no longer remain at the realm of morality, but involves the whole self, because

what we grasp affectively and intuitively prior to rational consciousness, what we care about deeply, and how we perceive and create our world are the soulful dimensions of our spirituality and morality. In the biblical sense, this living from the heart, or what we today call “conscience.” The “reasoning heart” of conscience enlists feelings, intuition, and imagination, along with critical reason, to interpret what is going on and to order our

¹⁴⁰ Gula, *The Good Life*, p. 124.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁴² One of the key insights of virtue ethics is that how we do something affects the kind of person we become (our character) and, in turn, the kind of person we are affects how we act. If we do things well, we become better; if we do them poorly, we become worse. This is applicable in what we are discussing as well. See *ibid.*, p. 121.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

values so that we can embody in our relationships the kind of life that will enable everyone and all of Creation to flourish.¹⁴⁴

Here we can clearly see that morality, spirituality and conscience are at play, and such convergence necessarily point to the need for discernment – discerning the presence of God. Then a converged life – life as response to God’s love – then is not about living in a world separate from one’s ordinary life. Rather, it is a life that can be lived within the very activities and responsibilities that fill the days, and in company of others. From the point of view of the Christian believer, to live such life means to grow in fullness as disciples of Jesus and to respond to the presence of God in a way that leads to full communion with God.¹⁴⁵

The confluence of morality and spirituality produces fruits in two areas namely, reorientation of morality and spirituality is verified against moral life. Vidal calls attention to the fact that the very definition of spirituality can in many ways limit its own scope.¹⁴⁶ The moral dimension of Christian life can serve as a touchstone for authentic spirituality as well as to avoid pitfalls in spirituality.¹⁴⁷ Today, a spirituality without a historic conscience or ethical commitment would be termed as non-realistic or immature; or may be even self-seeking. Spirituality, then, in company of morality fights the temptation of dualism, world-divine divisions, exaggerated asceticism, elitism and individualism, and so on. Throughout history there has always been a dualistic approach in Christian spirituality by the use of the ‘bodily’ against the ‘spiritual’ and in the words of Vidal, “con frecuencia, el dualismo, se deslizó hacia el maniqueísmo: valorando como positivo únicamente lo espiritual y despreciando lo corporal [...] con este esquema es negar, prácticamente, la bondad de lo creado por Dios e introducir una fisura en la unidad integral del ser humano y cristiano.”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Gula, “Morality and Spirituality,” p. 167.

¹⁴⁵ See Gula, *The Good Life*, p. 122.

¹⁴⁶ Pointing out that often the description of spirituality was influenced by cultural and anthropological sensibilities of the particular age, Vidal lists the varied meanings of the term spirituality in the past: perfection, union and holiness. Cf. Vidal, *Moral y espiritualidad*, pp. 29-30.

¹⁴⁷ “La presencia de la dimensión moral en la vida cristiana avisa a la espiritualidad de esos peligros que le acechan y le ofrece los cauces adecuados para incidir en la realidad intramundana y convertir de ese modo la experiencia religiosa en fuerza de transformación histórica.” Ibid., pp. 34-35.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 35.

Another dualism that is addressed is of human-divine division – the anthropologic dualism that stresses on separation of divine from anything human is fought by a convergence of morality and spirituality. And such an approach would emphasize the fact that progress in spirituality does not always mean going away from all that is human; on the contrary an illumination of its nature.¹⁴⁹ In the past, when spirituality was interpreted as an obligation to reach one’s own salvation, the focus was on the individual, often leading to an elitism, and exclusivism. Today, perfectionism by segregation is losing its charm and universal call to holiness is given more and more importance. The convergence would also give importance to historical conscience, incarnated spirituality and diversified ways to live ‘being merciful as the Father.’¹⁵⁰

3.3 Observations

The unity in diversity clearly shows that spirituality can never be separated from morality or morality concerns only of external acts ignoring the interior self that exerts great influence on external actions. Thus, we reiterate borrowing the words of Gula:

spirituality can never be separated from morality as some external aid that helps us to be good. Spirituality, with its array of practices, nourishes the moral life at its very roots by deepening our awareness of being loved and by energizing our commitment to living in a way that makes this love a real, transforming presence in the world. Spirituality is the wellspring of the moral life. That is to say that morality arises from, rather than generates, spirituality. The moral journey begins in that soulful space where we accept God’s love for us and awaken to responsibility for promoting the well-being of persons and the community in harmony with the environment.¹⁵¹

Thus, we can say that morality reveals one’s spirituality. Who we are is revealed in our spirituality, in our morality, and in the very manner we love and live. In other words, as Bernard says “la vida espiritual auténtica supone la rectitud moral.”¹⁵²

The historical development of spirituality and morality reveal the separate existence and yet the commonality among these two disciplines that concern about perfection in

¹⁴⁹ See *ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 36-38.

¹⁵¹ Gula, “Morality and Spirituality,” p. 176.

¹⁵² Bernard, *Teología espiritual*, p. 82.

Christian living. The interpretation and manner of understanding spirituality holds significance as they orient toward a particular way of acting out from such understanding. The theological life as the common ground for spirituality and morality set the common foundation on which these two disciplines stand and the renewal in recent years, especially around Vatican Council, propelled a convergence. The interpretation of morality as a way to live out the interior law of love coincides with spirituality as a way to experience and grow in love of God. The Trinitarian life, Christological and Pneumatologically basis point to the common goal of the two disciplines. We have seen that experiencing God in faith stands at the centre of spirituality and morality. This requires a contemplative spirit – which is promoted by daily discerning – because it is not possible to be a responsible Christian, with an adult spirituality, unless one is a contemplative.

The greater convergence of morality and spirituality is a further reinforcement for our interpretation of the examen from a discerning point of view: experiencing God is the heart of spirituality and morality, and both these methods lead to union with God. The reiteration that a morality that is reoriented from a spiritual vision, points to a shift away from a moralist examination that concerned only of compliance of law. The *moral redimensionada* is far from a minimum morality or of a casuist character with a legalist tone. At the same time, a newer pathway for spirituality is set out by morality – one that insists on verification through morally committed living – leans towards a spiritual living and discipleship that calls for commitment. The morality-spirituality convergence also highlighted the dangerous tendency of spirituality to rely on a dualistic anthropology, of body and spirit, as well as a segregation of divine or human. Spirituality in company of morality keep in check individualistic or elitist tendencies and instead move in the direction of perfection in charity, being merciful as the Father is merciful. The harmonious existence, then, between morality and spirituality places emphasis on daily encountering God, deepening such experience and discerning the response that is demanded of such experience.

4 Conscience, Consciousness and Discernment

4.1 Conscience

Conscience is one of the foundations not only of Christian morality but also of spirituality and a clear grasp of this term is fundamental in our work. It strictly is not a biblical term yet this has been used to refer to the innermost reality of human existence in Christian principles. Though the Bible makes very few reference to conscience, it is associated with heart when it is understood as the seat of all feelings and thoughts. Theologians would point out that is such a perspective one can understand what the prophets announced as a new law written on hearts: “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbour, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest” (Jer. 31: 33-34). Often, conscience and heart are used interchangeably because they indicate the most intimate, most personal dimension of humans, often identified as the centre of human existence. Over the years conscience has been defined as an inner voice that speaks to human heart.

The term does not exist in Hebrew and hence is rarely found in the Old Testament.¹⁵³ The closest alternative ‘*leb*’ (heart) is used to refer to what now is explained by conscience. In the NT, the Greek term ‘*syneidesis*’¹⁵⁴ is used in the Pauline writings to refer to conscience especially in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10.¹⁵⁵ Many scholars would say that as a concept, conscience assumed a great importance in Christian tradition as a result of

¹⁵³ Cf. Timothy O’Connell, “Conscience,” in *NDCSp.*, pp. 199-202, here p. 199; Ambrogio Valsecchi - Salvatore Privitera, “Conciencia,” in *Nuevo diccionario de teología moral* (edición española por Marciano Vidal), Madrid: Ediciones Paulinas, 1992, pp.233-255, here p. 234. (The entry is divided into four parts and Valsecchi has written parts I-III, while Privitera wrote part IV, the integration. We would be citing these authors separately but under the same entry ‘conciencia’).

¹⁵⁴ For a clearer idea on the debate over the terms *syneidesis* and *synderesis* see McBrien, *Catholicism*, p. 970-971 and Valsecchi, “Conciencia,” p. 234.

¹⁵⁵ Biblical scholars point out that the term *syneidesis*’ is very rare in Hellenistic literature prior to Christianity – appearing just four times and without any moral significance. This further points to Pauline origin of the term conscience. See Valsecchi, “Conciencia,” p. 234 and note 3 on p. 251.

such representations by Paul as well as through the subsequent Greco-Romanic philosophy.¹⁵⁶

Since conscience is a polysemic term it is too easy to be confused as to what it refers in spirituality and morality. This is due to the fact that in biblical language conscience is used to talk about heart, the centre of human being and this may not always be the case in moral theology where conscience forms a core theme. In philosophy conscience may be related to the human search for truth while psychologist use the term conscience in relation to conscious-unconscious part of a person.¹⁵⁷ In this regard it would be good to keep in mind that it is not the term itself that is confusing, rather the way this term is used in any given field; it is not the use of the term that changes the reflection but the diverse semantics employed that influence the course of interpretation, as Privitera rightly observes, “no es el término el que provoca la problemática, sino que es ésta la que va orientando de forma diversa la semántica; demuestran que no es el uso del término el que imprime significados particulares al planteamiento de la reflexión ética, sino que es el planteamiento de esta reflexión el que determina un uso semántico diverso del término consciencia.”¹⁵⁸ This would require that we mark out what semantics we employ in our work.

We can divide the term conscience as having four semantics namely, psychological, intellectual, volitional and parenetic.¹⁵⁹ The psychological semantic would be the sum total of what was imposed as obligations largely by significant others in childhood;¹⁶⁰ or it is the super ego. The intellectual semantic would present conscience as the faculty that makes judgment if an action is right or wrong; it would be termed as an internal tribunal that passes judgment on the morality of acts.¹⁶¹ It is here that the Scholastic division of anterior,

¹⁵⁶ O’Connell, “Conscience,” p. 199.

¹⁵⁷ See John W. Glaser, “Conscience and Superego: A Key Distinction,” in *Theological Studies*, pp. 30-47 for an interesting comparison between superego and conscience. Also Richard M. Gula, *Moral Discernment*, New York: Paulist Press, 1999, p. 15.

¹⁵⁸ Privitera, “Conciencia,” p. 254.

¹⁵⁹ Privitera talks of these distinctions as ‘semántica psicológica, semántica intelectual, semántica volitiva and semántica parenética.’ Cf. *ibid.* pp. 254-255.

¹⁶⁰ Here the most prominent views would be the affirmations of Friedrich Nietzsche or Luigi Pirandello who talk about the influence of authority on the formation of conscience. See *ibid.*, p. 254.

¹⁶¹ “La semántica intelectual ve la conciencia como la facultad a la que compete el juicio sobre lo moralmente bueno y recto en sí, sobre la bondad moral de la propia actitud y sobre la rectitud moral del comportamiento.” *Ibid.*

concomitant and posterior conscience are employed. In ethics and Moral theology where conscience is referred to as the final judge, such a semantic is employed. The volitional semantic considers conscience synonymous to heart in the biblical sense.¹⁶² When conscience is seen in relation to the function of exhorting and stimulating the will it is termed as parenetic semantic.¹⁶³ An understanding of such semantic usage and the polysemic nature of the term conscience allows us to move between morality and spirituality; this would also be seen in the light of what we have seen on the integration of morality and spirituality. Hence, in our study we, by and large, rely on the volitional and parenetic aspect of conscience.

Further, for our understanding, we base ourselves on the Biblical tradition and the magisterial teachings, and we can identify the conscience as an inner voice, as a judge of one's acts and as spiritual principle. In a moral sense, conscience is seen as an innate capacity that distinguishes humans from others and subsequently, humans come to know the divine law through such a faculty. “[La conciencia] a veces se presenta como una de las facultades o capacidades permanentes distintivas de la persona humana: aquella, más o menos viva y actuante, gracias a la cual podemos conocer la ley divina y la moralidad de los propios actos, lo que es moralmente lícito o ilícito, las exigencias morales que se plantean a cada persona.”¹⁶⁴ Giannino Piana describes conscience as “la sede última de la naturaleza ética de los actos humanos.”¹⁶⁵ Yet other times conscience is presented as the sum total of all the moral principles, or the code of conduct that guides a person.¹⁶⁶ It is in the same vein that conscience is referred to as an inner voice that expresses the moral dimension of a person.¹⁶⁷ Yet another way of looking at conscience from a Biblical

¹⁶² Privitera points out that in this semantic conscience is understood just as Emmanuel Kant talks of will, Karl Rahner of fundamental option, and so on. See *ibid.*, p. 255.

¹⁶³ “En la semántica parenética la conciencia es vista en su función de exhortar e invitar y estimular en relación con la voluntad y las actitudes.” *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ José María Yanguas Sanz, “Conciencia,” in *Diccionario de Teología*, (Cesar Izquierdo, et al), Pamplona: Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 2006, pp. 146-156, here p. 148.

¹⁶⁵ Giannino Piana, “Conciencia,” in *DTE*, Navarra: Editorial Verbo Divino, 1995, pp. 165-167, here p. 165.

¹⁶⁶ “La conciencia aparece entonces como el conjunto de los principios morales, el código moral, por el que se guía una persona, los criterios con los que se enjuician las acciones propias y ajenas.” Yanguas Sanz, “Conciencia,” p. 149.

¹⁶⁷ “La conciencia es, en resumen, la voz que manifiesta la percepción personal de la dimensión más humana de nuestros actos: su dimensión moral.” *Ibid.*

perspective is conscience as the interior judge, which is undoubtedly the most popular way.¹⁶⁸

Conscience as an inner voice, then, is related to the human capacity to know oneself because “hablar de la conciencia es hablar de conocimiento, de ciencia. El conocimiento que tenemos de nosotros mismos como autores de nuestros propios actos se conoce como *conciencia psicológica*. El conocimiento, en cambio, de la cualidad moral de los actos que queremos realizar o que ya hemos realizado lo llamamos *conciencia moral*.”¹⁶⁹ Here, then, we are concerned with ‘knowing morally’ and not psychologically, and we can affirm that conscience is the voice that expresses the personal perception of the most human dimension of any act.¹⁷⁰ Then, the quality of an action is judged using the intelligence, as morally right or wrong, as licit or to be avoided. It is through conscience that one achieves such a knowledge, yet it is also conscience itself that acts as a judge to verify such knowledge.

La decisión moral, a pesar de estar condicionada por elementos de carácter bio-psíquico y socio-cultural, es en último análisis expresión de la realidad más profunda del hombre: realidad que se pone de relieve solamente a través de una penetración en el ‘misterio’ de la persona, es decir, en los elementos fundamentales que la caracterizan. La conciencia es el lugar donde se verifica este acontecimiento. En consecuencia, el acceso a la misma permite captar el obrar del hombre en su espesor más profundamente humano.¹⁷¹

Thus, we see clearly that conscience is involved in a complex process of knowing and making a judgment about such knowing. When Piana terms it as “el yo captado en sus últimas dimensiones, es el lugar donde el hombre se auto conoce y decide de sí mismo. Es, por tanto, una realidad unitaria; más aún, es el centro de unificación de la persona”¹⁷² he refers to such knowing.

¹⁶⁸ In the letter to Romans when Paul talk of the Gentiles having no law, yet ‘they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them’ (2:15) he refers to the conscience as the interior judge. Paul also refers to conscience as a judge when he says “our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with integrity and godly sincerity. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God’s grace” (2 Cor. 1:12).

¹⁶⁹ Yanguas Sanz, “Conciencia,” p. 149.

¹⁷⁰ “La conciencia es, en resumen, la voz que manifiesta la percepción personal de la dimensión más humana de nuestros actos: su dimensión moral.” Cf. Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Piana, “Conciencia,” p. 166.

¹⁷² Ibid.

Another aspect of conscience, then, would be an ability to make judgments based on such perceptions; judgements about the moral quality of an action. And it is conscience that acts as the meeting point of moral law, human freedom and will, as *Veritatis Splendor* pointed out – conscience ‘confronts’ humans with the law and thus becoming a ‘witness,’ precisely because “conscience is the only witness, since what takes place in the heart of the person is hidden from the eyes of everyone outside. Conscience makes its witness known only to the person himself. And, in turn, only the person himself knows what his own response is to the voice of conscience.”¹⁷³

The ‘voice’ of conscience then would be the resulting from such an encounter between law and human freedom which emerge from the ‘heart’, the most intimate part of human person; we could say that “la conciencia es la ‘sede viva’ de las relaciones entre la verdad moral objetiva y la libertad personal.”¹⁷⁴ This clearly points to the fact the conscience is a complex notion that refers to moral agent, a capacity to decide the morality of an action or an innate nature that permits interiorization. For our purpose, then, we understand conscience as the most personal dimension or the core of human person where the voice of God is echoed and good and evil are judged.

Another way of understanding conscience is by affirming its functions in its three-fold dimensions namely a capacity, a process and a judgement. That is to say, as a capacity, conscience is the fundamental ability to discern good and evil; it is used to name the process of discovering what makes for being a good person and what particular action is morally right or wrong; and this process leads to a judgment.¹⁷⁵ This is in line with what the Vatican Council II defined as an inner voice:

in the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. Always summoning him to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience when necessary speaks to his heart: do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law written by God; to obey it is the very dignity of man; according to it he will be judged. Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a man. There he is alone with God, Whose voice echoes in his depths. In a wonderful manner conscience reveals that law which is fulfilled by love of God and neighbor. In fidelity to conscience,

¹⁷³ VS, 57.

¹⁷⁴ Yanguas Sanz, “Conciencia,” p. 148.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Gula, *Moral Discernment*, p. 18

Christians are joined with the rest of men in the search for truth, and for the genuine solution to the numerous problems which arise in the life of individuals from social relationships. Hence the more right conscience holds sway, the more persons and groups turn aside from blind choice and strive to be guided by the objective norms of morality. Conscience frequently errs from invincible ignorance without losing its dignity. The same cannot be said for a man who cares but little for truth and goodness, or for a conscience which by degrees grows practically sightless as a result of habitual sin.¹⁷⁶

The biblical tradition also presents conscience in close connection with wisdom, a divine attribute, wherein it is affirmed that God bestows wisdom and grace to people and these would lead them to a righteous life.¹⁷⁷ It is here that conscience and the will of God are intimately linked.

La conciencia como sabiduría tiene pues una dimensión fundamentalmente práctica: permite conocer si nuestro modo de actuar, en el momento presente o en el pasado, agrada a Dios. La conciencia es como la presencia en nosotros de la verdad y la sabiduría divinas. No está encerrada en sí misma, remite a algo más allá y por encima de ella misma. La conciencia discierne la voluntad de Dios e impulsa a su cumplimiento. Cuando su dictamen coincide con la voluntad de Dios, decimos que la conciencia es verdadera. Si el juicio de la conciencia no coincide con lo que Dios pide aquí u ahora, hablamos de conciencia errónea.¹⁷⁸

The relation between conscience and discerning the will of God is clearly expressed here, and this would mean that the wisdom that comes from God is revealed in the conscience but humans need to discern it within his/her context. “La conciencia guarda también estrecha relación con [...] el corazón, sede del rico mundo interior de la persona, de sus sentimientos, pensamientos, juicios y deseos. El corazón humano denota el hombre en su intimidad, es fuente última de nuestras acciones, morada última del yo, inaccesible a cualquier otra mirada que no sea la de uno mismo o la de Dios.”¹⁷⁹

At the same time, conscience does not create values, but rather allows the values to act in a person:

¹⁷⁶ *GS*, 16.

¹⁷⁷ “La Sagrada Escritura afirma el estrecho lazo que une la conciencia y la sabiduría, uno de los atributos divinos. Dios regala la sabiduría a los hombres y gracias a ella éstos pueden conducir su vida rectamente, leyendo y discerniendo la voluntad de Dios en los acontecimientos y situaciones.” Yanguas Sanz, “Conciencia,” p. 147.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

aun cuando conciencia es ‘órgano’ de interiorización personal de la verdad moral, no la precede ni está sobre ella. La conciencia no crea el valor o la verdad moral de nuestros actos; existe, más bien en función de esta, es decir, existe para que la verdad moral alcance las acciones de la persona, para que sea luz y criterio de comportamiento. Conciencia y verdad moral se requieren mutuamente, no son realidades contrapuestas y excluyentes.¹⁸⁰

From this it follows that the conscience does not automatically become a judge or a witness to divine messages, but through the formation of moral obligations a practical judgement is arrived at, always through an encounter between law and human freedom,¹⁸¹ through the process of discernment.

As we have already said, conscience is precisely a human character through which one experiences as being responsible for one’s behaviour and from such sense of accountability arises the need to confess and to apologize when one realizes one is wrong. Though the act or event of making judgement about right-wrong is peculiar to conscience, it is not an end in itself, i.e., conscience is not the ultimate reality, but is at the service of moral rectitude. The goal of moral life, then, is not that one follows one’s conscience but rather that one does what is right.¹⁸²

Thus, when we talk of conscience we clearly see that it is rooted in the biblical tradition of heart, though over the years the emphasis has shifted. The medieval understanding of conscience – as a function of the intellect, of practical reasoning, or that of the will, of choosing – gave way to the idea that it was a rationalist operation that functioned in a deductive way from first principles.¹⁸³ This Tridentine concept made way for a newer understanding in the Vatican Council II which talked of conscience as the most secret core and sanctuary of man where the voice of God echoed. Later, *Veritatis Splendor* affirmed the conscience as the link between human freedom and moral truth. Today the

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 150.

¹⁸¹ This whole ambit of human freedom is important in moral theology especially since it is here that the spectrum of formation of conscience and moral responsibility come in. It is also to be noted that resources like spiritual direction is an effective tool precisely in such context when one is looking to find the will of God through discernment. “La dirección espiritual, en fin, constituye una valiosa ayuda a la hora de discernir la voluntad divina. La guía espiritual a cargo de un consejero prudente y sabio que conoce bien la historia personal, puede facilitar una palabra sincera y libre con la que contrastar las propias decisiones.” Ibid., pp. 155-156.

¹⁸² Cf. O’Connell, “Conscience,” p. 200.

¹⁸³ Cf. Gula, *Moral Discernment*, p. 17.

term conscience refers at a primary level¹⁸⁴ to a fundamental sense of value and of personal responsibility. Another level of conscience would refer to the act of conscience – the judgement about something as morally right or wrong. At a third level of conscience, of reaching a decision, is where the process of conscience-formation assumes importance because we know that only a ‘rightly formed conscience’¹⁸⁵ deserves obedience. The act of conscience, where choices are made, is important in Christian life because it involves a process of discernment, and it is in this level that there could be error owing to ignorance.

4.2 Consciousness

Consciousness is referred to as a personal reality, that is to say only persons and what they do or suffer are referred to as conscious. Consciousness is a presence to oneself of oneself as well as one’s acts, and thus it is termed experiential. We have seen in the previous section that conscience is a human quality whereby one experiences as being responsible for one’s actions, and here, in a similar way, consciousness pertains to another level of personal reality. While conscience is related to behaviour, morality, and values, consciousness can be termed as ‘my being-present to myself and my actions’ as far as that is possible. We can say that consciousness is the “complexity of feelings and emotion within us, revealed to us through our activity, our encounters and relationships with others, our work, what we read, hear and see, and of the internal activity which results from this, our hopes and desires, sadness and joy, fears and expectations, certainties and doubts.”¹⁸⁶

Activities or operations that are conscious have two things in common: they are intentional as well as conscious. By intentional what is meant is not that they are deliberate

¹⁸⁴ There are various terms like semantics, levels, or aspects employed to describe the complexity of the whole concept conscience. They are not totally opposed to one another; rather different dimension of the same reality is brought out. Here we borrow the term ‘level’ from O’Connell, whereas Gula employs ‘capacity, process and judgement.’

¹⁸⁵ Formation of conscience is a whole area in theology that discusses the relation of external factors and grace in such process. Without going into any discussion, we just point out that this is a complex process. “La conciencia es una realidad compleja, constituida por la presencia simultánea de diversos factores que no son fácilmente homologables. En ella confluyen los mecanismos instintivos y los dinamismos psicológicos del inconsciente; con ella se relacionan los elementos de racionalidad y voluntariedad propios del ser humano.” Piana, “Conciencia,” p. 166. See also CCC, 1777ff.

¹⁸⁶ Gerard W. Hughes, *God of Surprises*, London: DLT, 2000, p. 17.

or planned, but that they are *intend* in the technical sense, [...] that each makes something present to me. Although these operations are mine, although they are given, they are not merely psychological events. As given, they disclose or refer to some other.¹⁸⁷ So the intentionality of them make them present to me. With regard to the second aspect of consciousness, i.e. the mind knowing itself in the very act in which it understands the word ‘itself.’ This knowing oneself is possible because of one’s presence to oneself. This is what is called consciousness as a presence to oneself. Based on such twofold characters we can distinguish consciousness as follows:

human operations occur that are at once conscious and intentional. As intentional, they make objects present; as conscious, they are present and they make their subjects present. Consciousness is the presence to the subject of the operation, and of the operating subject as intending an object but not as object intended. The subject is conscious, in the sense of being that which is conscious; an intentional act is conscious, in the sense of being that by which the subject is conscious; the object of such an act is not conscious in any sense whatever.¹⁸⁸

This presence-to-self is different from other kinds of presence like presence by vicinity or intentional presence. Such kind of presence underlines the fact that the ‘subject’ of such acts as well as the ‘object’ are the same person at a given time¹⁸⁹ because consciousness is the presence of the one whose present intentional act is making some object present.

Consciousness understood as the presence of oneself to oneself is experiential, which would mean that like sense-experience, it has the givenness, but without this givenness being sensed. Therefore, all experiencing is conscious, but not all experience is consciousness. Yet another distinction that needs to be made, when we say that consciousness is experiential, is that consciousness is not the same as perception or observation. For, such observation would mean that ‘a kind of inward vision that allows

¹⁸⁷ Charles C. Hefling Jr., “Consciousness,” in *NDCSp.*, pp. 202-207, here p. 202.

¹⁸⁸ Hefling Jr., “Consciousness,” p. 203.

¹⁸⁹ Presence in the sense of vicinity is the presence of the jar to the jam, while intentional presence consists in the intend in the technical sense like the presence of a sound as heard or of an idea as being considered. However, by consciousness we do not mean any of these. “This presence-to-self is consciousness properly so called, and what a conscious act as conscious makes present, together with the act itself, is the *subject* of that act. [...] It is the presence of the dreamer who is dreaming, as dreaming; of the hearer who is hearing, as hearing; of the thinker who is thinking, as thinking, and so on.” Ibid.

me to catch glimpse of myself.’ On the contrary, consciousness being far from a perception, is experiential – presence to oneself of oneself. Since self-observation is not possible in the sense that we are discussing, consciousness could be understood as an infrastructure. That is to say, we understand introspection not as self-observation but as self-knowledge.

Anyone who is consciously operating in any way already has, by the very fact of being conscious, a preliminary, unpatterned awareness of himself or herself and his or her operating. But this awareness need not have been noticed, acknowledged, explored, distinguished, named, described, interpreted, explained, or understood. Just as outer experiences of sensation are not yet full human knowledge of the intelligible world, so likewise the inner experience that is consciousness is not yet fully knowledge of consciousness. Thus, we see that consciousness is related to the way we know, and as such, human knowing is a matter of raising and answering questions about experiences. Hence, it is through an introspection of inner experiences that one gains self-knowledge, knowledge with regard to the consciousness.

When we consider self-knowledge regarding consciousness, we also need to keep in mind that raising questions about one’s own consciousness is itself a conscious operation, as points out Hefling Jr. This would point to the type of language that is employed to describe such experience; to raise questions explicitly about one’s own consciousness is to make use of some supra-structure of language that is not immediately given but mediated by one’s own culture. This would necessarily lead us to distinguish between infrastructure and suprastructure: inner experience as the infrastructure and grasping of this experience more or less correctly as the suprastructure.¹⁹⁰ And what is most important is the fact that the relationship between these two is dynamic and relational, and therefore the need for intensifying consciousness as infrastructure in and through its engagement with the linguistic suprastructure.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ Here, by infrastructure we mean the inner experience itself, while the suprastructure refers to the interpretation and evaluation of these same experiences.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Hefling Jr., “Consciousness,” p. 204.

Hefling Jr. observes that such heightening or intensification of consciousness is the competence of spiritual direction and discernment, and the like precisely because these exercises help express and objectify the contents of the consciousness. While pointing out that there are four levels of intentional consciousness – empirical, intellectual, rational and moral – Hefling Jr. rightly observes that conscious operations effect transition from one sort to another through questions. In as far as they look for answers, they are intentional and therefore depending on the type of questions raised there is a search and this leads one to self-transcendence. As such, conscious human subject is not a static entity and this pushes beyond oneself. Hefling Jr. talks of consciousness and transcendence in the following way:

Human being is a becoming and each of us is a subject by degrees. My exercise of intelligence is response to my own wonder and curiosity moves me beyond a merely biological habitat into the human world of meaning; at the same time, it is a moving beyond myself. My exercise of reasonable judgement in response to further questions likewise moves me beyond speculation and idea into knowledge of how things really are; at the same time, it is a further achievement of self-surpassing. And not only do I transcend myself; I thereby constitute myself as well, in the sense that I effect my own becoming. I can, as human, be intelligent and reasonable, but it is in the same measure in which I actualize this capacity that I constitute myself as a knower, as *homo sapiens*.¹⁹²

The life-long process of self-constitution goes on as infrastructure, even if unaware. “One drifts with the current, unaware of having appropriated unquestioningly the suprastructure of meaning and values that one’s culture has to offer. On the other hand, there can come a point at which the conscious subject is not only self-constituting but knowingly and deliberately self-constituting. It is at this point that consciousness becomes conscience.”¹⁹³ This person then becomes a person at the fullest sense, and this could be called becoming the *imago Dei*, the goal of moral as well as spiritual life.

Religious consciousness belongs to the deepest level of consciousness, and often it is named as love. “Like other conscious contents, it need not be recognized or named or even attended to, much less understood and known. Even when noticed, its being as yet unknown makes it an experience of mystery, of what is beyond one’s achieved knowledge,

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 205.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 206.

and an experience of awe, of what is above one's acknowledged values."¹⁹⁴ When we talk of consciousness examen, thus, we would be talking at this level where the conscious contents of our inner self is to be noticed in order to grow in self-knowledge. As we have said, such knowledge is possible through discerning the movements of various spirits at the consciousness with a view to identify the possible deception, to clarify their source and to notice the direction. Here, it is then that a process of discernment is taking place at the deepest part of human being.

4.3 Discernment

Having clarified the difference between conscience and consciousness, we would like to clarify for ourselves what we mean by discernment when we refer to it in our work.¹⁹⁵ We know that Ignatius inherited the term discernment from the long tradition of the Church. As Futrell points out, "in Christian tradition discernment is a much broader conception, which involves choosing the way of the light of Christ instead of the way of the darkness of the Evil One and living out the consequences of this choice through discerning what specific decisions and actions are demanded to follow Christ here and now."¹⁹⁶ Though 'discernment of spirits' is not a vocabulary of the Spiritual Exercises,¹⁹⁷ Ignatius talk of discretion of spirits and provides rules for the same. For him, then, discerning then is a process of "sifting through of interior experiences in order to determine their origin and to discover which ones are movements toward following the way of light."¹⁹⁸ Discernment, then, is a complex process of dividing, separating, and distinguishing interior movements and based on that process to choose concrete actions.

Ignatius refers to the term discretion in the *Sp ex* exclusively in the Rules for Discernment of Spirits when he marks out 'reglas para en alguna manera sentir y conocer las varias

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ The bibliography on this aspect of Ignatian Spirituality is immense and what we intend here is merely to summarize what the dictionary on this topic has to say.

¹⁹⁶ John Carroll Futrell, "Ignatian Discernment," in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits 2* (1970) pp. 47-88, here p. 47.

¹⁹⁷ See *Concordancia*, pp. 387-388. See also Michael J. Buckley, "Discernimiento," in *DEI* pp. 607-611, here p. 607.

¹⁹⁸ Futrell, "Ignatian Discernment," pp. 47-48.

emociones en alma se causan' [313ff.] which is aimed at election. And in the *Consti* it is used in a larger context while other writings do not employ this term, as the *Concordancia* point out. However, the Exercises are meant to 'seek and find the will of God' and to this effect, the whole spiritual process of removal of sins or inordinate attachments, gradual disposition and indifference are organized. Therefore, "los *Ejercicios* atribuyen enorme importancia a la experiencia religiosa, entendiéndola como una interacción constante con Dios en la que intervienen la afectividad y el conocimiento interno, la meditación, la contemplación, el examen de conciencia y otras formas de oración, la consolación y la desolación, las consideraciones y la elección, todas las cuales son sintomáticamente importantes para buscar, encontrar y elegir la voluntad de Dios en su vida."¹⁹⁹

From this it is clear that precisely because spiritual experiences are ambiguous, such a process of discernment involves risks – the challenge is to identify what comes from God and what from elsewhere. With such assumptions, Ignatius cautions to examine everything so as not to be deceived by the appearance [*Sp. Ex.* 332] and proposes what is termed as the Rules for Discernment [*Sp. Ex.* 313ff.]. These Rules are easily divided into two groups, ones more suitable for the First Week and the other for more experienced: "las Reglas mismas están divididas en dos grupos según se refieran a dos clases diversas de personas, en distinto momento o etapa de su experiencia espiritual: las reglas para la Primera Semana se ocupan de los que son tentados abiertamente por el mal; mientras que las reglas para la Segunda Semana están destinadas a los tentados engañosamente por el mal bajo apariencia de bien [*Ej* 10]."²⁰⁰ The difference of these two weeks lies in the affective experience of persons and their orientations, or in other words "las reglas para la Primera Semana califican la experiencia afectiva como consolación o desolación en función de los objetos a que tienden; en cambio, las reglas para la Segunda Semana juzgan los objetos hacia los que se tiende y que se escogen según la consolación o desolación que producen."²⁰¹

When discernment involves classifying the affective movements and choosing a course of action based on such identification, it calls for much attention on and examining the

¹⁹⁹ Buckley, "Discernimiento," p. 607.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 607-608.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 608.

origin, the course and the direction of these movements. The discernment principles of the First Week point out that since consolation and desolation are affective in nature, they are not identical to sensible satisfactions, “la consolación espiritual y la desolación espiritual son estados de la afectividad, pero no se definen por su disfrute sensible y aun espiritual, sino por su dirección, es decir, si este sentimiento o estado de la afectividad tiende hacia Dios o se aparta de él.”²⁰² In the second Week, on the other hand, Ya no es suficiente saber cómo comportarse con los atractivos de lo obviamente malo o con el temor ante el costo del discipulado. Hace falta estar alerta mucho tiempo sobre la atracción que se siente a lo que aparece como bueno para ver si, en efecto, lo es realmente en la forma como debe resolverse.” Here, when there is deception under the appearance of good, the concern is no more moral implications, but moves beyond to spiritual deceptions. That is, “lo que anda en juego aquí no es cómo reconocer y combatir la desolación, sino cómo distinguir entre verdadera y falsa consolación, entre los influjos que de veras llevan a Dios y los que de hecho, pero encubiertamente, alejan de Dios.”²⁰³ The rules for discernment also makes the distinction between consolation with cause or without a corresponding cause and this is based on the assumption that God is the giver of consolations. When a consolation is with a cause, it invariably has a beginning, a middle and an end which need to be scrutinized so as not to be deceived.

Thus, discernment is a spiritual process of gradually distinguishing different spirits and the movements produced by them, in order to detect their effects after duly examining the whole course of thought process and affective responses. Then, it becomes clear that we are talking here of a spiritual exercise, a process where the Spirit assumes primary role, or as some would call as a dialectic process of the Word of God interacting with the concrete reality.²⁰⁴ This process is not limited to the duration of the Exercises, rather, based on the experiences gained during such times, one is to choose God in concrete situations.

²⁰² Ibid., p. 609.

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 610.

²⁰⁴ “The process of discernment requires a continuing ‘dialectic’ of the existential word of God and the prophetic word of God. The dialectic consists of attending to all the factors posed within the concrete situation and then reflecting upon, them in the light of the prophetic word of God, until one finally can assess, interpret, and determine what God is actually demanding from him as his response to the call of God to him here and now.” Futrell, “Ignatian Discernment,” p. 50.

5 The Practice of Confession in the Church

The sacrament of reconciliation is more than anything related to morality and spirituality, and in our effort to study the examination of conscience it is absolutely necessary to look at the confessional practices prior to and during the life Ignatius. This practice of examination of conscience has long been associated with the confessionals that helped a penitent to make a better confession. As a practice inherited from the Church, Ignatius would have learned to examine his life along with other articles of faith that he would have learnt in his childhood. Now we analyse the confessional practices of the Ignatian era in order to situate the idea of conscience that Ignatius imbibed from sacraments like confession as well as to articulate the role of examination that Ignatius visualized.²⁰⁵ We look at this part of his life with the assumption that when Ignatius approached the monastery at Montserrat with the desire of making a general confession, he was merely following the longstanding tradition of his time. For Ignatius, then, morality and spirituality were all present in the practice of confession.

5.1 Historical Developments

Throughout the history of the Church, the sacrament of reconciliation was referred to with different names like penance, reconciliation, confession, and pardon, and the terms, more than academic interest, signify different theological understanding of this sacrament.²⁰⁶ During the Patristic period, the Greek Fathers employed terms like confession and conversion while the Latin Fathers talked of penance and the penitential process.²⁰⁷ Later, during the sixth century with the arrival of Celtic penitential system, the term confession was largely employed and continued upto the Vatican Council II. From then on, the term penance and reconciliation have gained importance.²⁰⁸ In the present-day literature

²⁰⁵ See Robert A. Maryks, "Confesión," in *DEI*, pp. 378-381.

²⁰⁶ See Fernando Millán Romeral, *La penitencia hoy: claves para una renovación*, Bilbao/Madrid: Desclée de Brouwer/UPCo, 2001, pp. 99-100.

²⁰⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 101-102 for a detailed analysis of the Greek and Latin terms.

²⁰⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 104ff.

we find multiple terms being employed like sacrament of confession, sacrament of penitence and sacrament of reconciliation.

A quick glance at the history of the sacrament of reconciliation in the Catholic Church would reveal that this ancient practice of confession has evolved in three distinct stages namely a) public penance b) development of penitential c) the practice of private confession. The first instances of some kind of formal system of forgiveness of serious offences and the process of reconciliation are seen in the middle of the second century. The extreme severity was the striking feature of this era and the expulsion of a sinner was more common than forgiveness of sins. Such ‘canonical penances’ were public,²⁰⁹ just so was exclusion of sinner from the body of faithful. Reconciliation, through a public ceremony, was a much later development.²¹⁰ Scholars point out that it is in the mid-third century that we find written documents for the first instance where a penitent approaches a priest for confession, when still the normal practice was to have confession in public with public penances.²¹¹ Some would say that the humiliation of penance in public kept most people away from confessing, and even deferring it until the last moment possible, that is, confessing at death bed.

Penance at death was a norm by the pontificate of St. Leo in fifth century, which meant that the ceremony of reconciliation was more than disciplinary. And it was during this period that the first instance of official stand on confession came in 452 from Pope Leo I, who defined the wholesome confession as a condition precedent to reconciliation.²¹² An interesting development around this period was the debate on penance, whether doing penance or receiving penance.²¹³ These fundamentally conflicting opinions – “no one is to be despaired of while he still lives in his body” and “do penance while you are alive”

²⁰⁹ See Thomas N. Tentler, *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977, pp. 4ff.

²¹⁰ Reconciliation for sins like murder, adultery, idolatry was allowed gradually since it was held that ‘there is only one penance, just as there is only one baptism.’ Cf. Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, p. 4.

²¹¹ Henry Charles Lea, *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church*, vol. I, Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co., 1896, p. 175. See also Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, p. 5.

²¹² Cf. Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, pp. 182-183.

²¹³ *Doing* penance refers to the practice of undertaking practices that lead to contrition when one is still healthy, while *receiving* penance was the way of accepting then when one is no longer healthy or when one is at deathbed.

represented by Leo the Great and St. Augustine – were to leave their mark on later discussions on the theology of sacraments and morality in general.²¹⁴

Another development in the history of the practice of confession was in the context of Anglo-Saxon missions pertaining to the role of priests in private confessions when the customary practice was to leave it to the Bishop to deal with confessors.²¹⁵ Scholars would argue that people approached priests because “it was a vast relief to the sinner thus to quiet his conscience without public humiliation and the hardships of public penance.”²¹⁶ The developments of *Penitentials* in Ireland – short manuals that classified sins and the penances for specific sins – marked another milestone in the history of confessional practices. The popularity and success of such penitential ‘tariff’ was due to a clear contrast with the old system, because

canonical penance was thoroughly public, whereas the penitential instituted a system that was essentially private, between a priest and an individual penitent. Penance was now privately imposed, for although it required, like canonical penance, denial of the sacraments for the duration of Lent, there was no longer a formal entrance into an order of penitents. Nor in this new system was there a solemn and public reconciliation. Penitents had other inestimable advantages as well. The forgiveness offered under the penitentials left no harsh disabilities. in addition, it was reiterable; and it could be used frequently not only for grave sins but also for less serious offenses.²¹⁷

The penitentials provided a way of easy restoration which made it successful in the years that followed.

²¹⁴ Leo the Great is of the opinion that deathbed penance was substantially the same thing as normal canonical penance and the great comfort of forgiveness could not be denied to the dying, even when they were not able to fulfil the penitential exercises. Augustine, on the other hand was of the view that the sinner must change his life while he lives, while he is healthy and not to wait to be reconciled till the end, for ‘many have expired expecting to be reconciled.’ And he reiterated, “do you wish to free yourself from doubt? Do penance while you are healthy. You can be sure of the sincerity of such a penance because you do it while it is still possible to sin. But if you do penance when you no longer are able to sin, it is more a case of the sins abandoning you than of your abandoning the sins.” As quoted in Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, p. 9. See pp. 6-9 for a discussion on such contrasting view.

²¹⁵ “To the new and ignorant converts the priest was the direct representative of God, regarded with veneration very different from that which he excited in the polished citizens of Nimes or Rome or Constantinople, and any claim which he might put forward of supernatural power was not likely to be gainsaid.” Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, p. 186.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

²¹⁷ Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, p. 9.

As early as the eighth century the confessional practices were individual and penances were given by the priest personally. The confessionals composed during this period support this view that private confession was a common practice. We know that as the system of private confession gradually evolved the efforts to make confession a periodic practice²¹⁸ was not at all met with enthusiasm: in eighth century some regulations regarding confessing before Christmas was in place²¹⁹ and we find that in the early 9th century Ash Wednesday was chosen as the day for such practice. It must be kept in mind that the practice of private confession was not a universal phenomenon as there were distinct practices in different parts of the world. In the earlier centuries, the little importance given to confession is evident from the fact that most of the monasteries, whom we expect to be centres of spiritual life, continued to practice the public form of confession and penance. The available evidence suggests Benedictine monks confessing in public even till fifteenth century when weekly confession was made obligatory;²²⁰ around the year 1080 the Cluniac Order had daily chapters of confession and accusation and there are no indications of private confession;²²¹ the Carthusian monks were to confess to a priest only on death bed;²²² the Cistercians also do not talk of a formal confession, though there are detailed instructions given on self-accusations, punishment and absolution.²²³ Thus the sacramental confession gradually evolved over the centuries, though there was no uniformity in its practice, be it among laity or even among monks.

When the confession as a practice was adopted by the Church in order to quieten the conscience, it was meant for the entire life and it was indeed rare. Lea points out that that penitents were expected to come forward only when “in fear of approaching death or some unusual danger, and that the misdeeds of a lifetime were accumulated to be rehearsed in a single effort to quiet the conscience. The long-protracted ceremonies, moreover,

²¹⁸ Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, p. 187.

²¹⁹ Lea says that it was Egbert of York who introduced such practice quoting the authority of Theodore of Canterbury. It was required for all, lay ad clerics, to confess within twelve days of Christmas as a preparation for communion of Nativity. Cf. *ibid.*

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 198 -199.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

²²² The rules of Abbot Guigo in 1128 states of this practice, though their founder St. Bruno had not framed any such rules. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 199-200.

²²³ See *ibid.*, p. 201.

rendered it impossible for a priest to expedite more than a very few penitents, and could only have been framed at a time when a confession was an infrequent occurrence.”²²⁴ Tentler points to the sheer length of the penance and its harshness as the reason that kept people away²²⁵ from confessions, and yet we see that the system moved from canonical penance to penitentials and then auricular confession took roots steadily.

All the same, scholars agree that it was during what they called the “long twelfth century”²²⁶ that penitential theory and practice fully embraced the privacy of conscience. The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 is considered as the watershed in this important sacrament of the Catholic Church²²⁷ which held

all the faithful of both sexes shall after they have reached the age of discretion faithfully confess all their sins at least once a year to their own (parish) priest and perform to the best of their ability the penance imposed, receiving reverently at least at Easter the sacrament of the Eucharist, unless perchance at the advice of their own priest they may for a good reason abstain for a time from its reception; otherwise they shall be cut off from the Church (excommunicated) during life and deprived of Christian burial in death. Wherefore, let this salutary decree be published frequently in the churches, that no one may find in the plea of ignorance a shadow of excuse. But if anyone for a good reason should wish to confess his sins to another priest, let him first seek and obtain permission from his own (parish) priest, since otherwise he (the other priest) cannot lose or bind him.²²⁸

Such definite step of enjoining annual and individual confession is seen as a move away from evoking shame to personal guilt with a view to regulating behaviour, as Kramer observes: “penance evolved into a one-step process with reconciliation occurring when the

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 192.

²²⁵ “If a cleric is guilty of homicide, the Roman Penitential begins, “he shall do penance for ten years, three of these are bread and water;” for the same ‘crime a layman gets seven years with three on bread and water. A cleric whose adultery results in childbirth will do penance for seven years, but if it is without issue and not notorious, then he need only do penance for three years, one of them on bread and water [...]. Perjury is penalized with three to seven years’ penance; serious theft, five to seven, and usury, three years (one on bread and water) [...]. Sacrileges owing to neglect are punished in terms of days; bestiality can be worth twenty-five years if the offender is over thirty.” Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, p. 11.

²²⁶ This term is popularly used to designate the period from 1050 to 1215. Cf. Susan R. Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood in the Twelfth-Century West*, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2015, p. 23.

²²⁷ There are two views on the possible origin of confession. The minimalist view represented by André Vauchez who argues that the early medieval society was only superficially Christian. The others like Joseph Avril hold a positive approach who say that regular confession was a standard practice. See David Bachrach, “Confession in the *Regnum Francorum* (742-900): the sources revisited,” in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 54 (2003), pp. 3-22.

²²⁸ *Canon 21 of Lateran Council IV, ND*, p. 661.

sinner fully confessed his or her sins to a parish priest rather than after completing the imposed expiatory acts. The movement from ‘a penance of expiation’ to the ‘verbal demonstration of one’s sins and remorse’ is seen as signaling the emergence of inwardness.”²²⁹ Thus, a definite change from shame to guilt, public to private penance took place around this period.²³⁰

Prior to the developments of *confesionales*, contrition as the principal part of penance was upheld – sin is remitted by contrition of heart²³¹ and pardon comes from sorrow proceeding from the love of God – leading to the debate about the necessity of confessing to priests.²³² The subsequent developments can be summarised, in the words of Tentler, “the thirteenth century church, while still accepting the primacy of contrition in the sacramental process of the justification of the individual Christian, conferred on the confession of sins to the priest a more impelling necessity than ever before.”²³³ The practice of private confession to priests became the common practice gradually, as Lea points out, “as private or auricular confession gradually supplanted public, it naturally fell into the hands of the priestly class, who were regarded as experts in the matter of repentance and penance and who, in Penitentials, had standards by which to apportion the penalty to the sin.”²³⁴ In such a manner, the priest’s power of absolution, his intervention in the forgiveness of sins became more visible and important than it had ever been before.

²²⁹ Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood*, p. 24.

²³⁰ This does not mean that public nature of penance was done away with, as know from later history. “The public, social nature of penitential rituals did not vanish with the adoption of new rites considered to be indicative of greater concerns with privacy [...]. In addition, the rite of public penance remained an important practice at least into the thirteenth century. Even the form of individual confession imposed by Lateran IV in 1215 had significant public elements. [...] this practice occurred as part of pre-Lenten communion a community event. Since there were no individual confessionals [...] penitential practice thereby retained its public, shame-inducing elements with respect to the form of its rituals into the High Middle Ages.” Ibid. pp. 24-25.

²³¹ See Colin Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050 to 1250*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, p. 372.

²³² “But if contrition is the principal part of the Sacrament of Penance, is there any need for confession? What does the priest do? Was it not possible, even logical, to conclude that the telling of sins and the intervention of the priest had become superfluous, that the forgiveness of sins was purely a matter between the contrite man and a forgiving God?” Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, p. 19.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, p. 217.

The decree of the Lateran Council however does not mean that there was no individual confession prior to that; but instead, as often happens, the already existing practices were ratified or formalized in the Council.²³⁵ Once the system of private confession came into existence, the practice of private penance grew stronger. According to the canonical and penitential systems public penance was required, but in the private confession system, penance also was private. Though over the years, the mode of enforcing penance underwent change, what remained was the requirements, namely, of sorrow, ecclesial participation and rigorous penitential exercises.²³⁶ Inner sorrow was fundamental to all these forms of confession, and forgiveness undoubtedly rested most securely on works of expiation, though the forms of performing them might have varied.²³⁷

Another interesting aspect that has its beginning in this period is insistence on internal sins and keeping secrecy. Based on the teachings of Augustine, questions of internal sins, sins of thought and intention, and modes of sinning – through thoughts, action and habit – assumed greater importance.²³⁸ Other teachings of Augustine that had bearing on the developments are his distinction between known sins and sins that are secret as well as the classification of sins into three types namely, sin in the heart (*in corde*), sin in deed (*in facto*), and sin through habit (*in consuetudine*).²³⁹ There were many other exegetists who held the view that “If a sin is secret (*peccatum occultum*), it suffices to bring it to the notice of a priest, as grace is the gift of office. [...] He resuscitated inside, whom he found inside, leaving present only the mother and father of the girl, and Peter, Paul, John and James, in whom the priests of the church are figuratively preserved (*in quibus infigura continentur sacerdotes ecclesiae*).”²⁴⁰ And we find similar arguments from other writers, in

²³⁵ Analysing various texts, including sermons, letters, religious treaties, and government documents of this era Bachrach argues that private confessions existed much before the Fourth Lateran Council. “The mid-eighth century was a particularly important period in development of lay confessional practice for soldiers and all other lay people in France for it was at this time that the revolutionary idea of repeatable confession began to be adopted as a regular element in lay religious life. The older Christian doctrine dealing with penance had permitted a once-in-a-lifetime confession for lay people, a rite that was understood to serve as a second baptism, after which the penitent was to adopt a monastic lifestyle.” Bachrach, “Confession in the *Regnum*,” p. 9.

²³⁶ Cf. Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, pp. 10-11.

²³⁷ See *ibid.*

²³⁸ Cf. Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood*, pp. 25-26.

²³⁹ Cf. *ibid.* pp. 27ff.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

this case Geoffrey Babion who said “whoever sins in secret must be raised secretly through private confession just as was the girl in the home and in the resurrection of the girl, the crowd was ordered to go out with the exception of a few witnesses, that is her father and mother, who were ordered not to tell anyone. Similarly, for lighter, secret sins, private penance must be given.”²⁴¹ The many biblical commentaries, sermons and other writings of this period, thus vouch for the fact that there was a clear change in attitude and a mere accidental change.²⁴²

Augustine’s teaching on internal sins has much to do with what was perceived as conscience then – wholly internal sins are remitted by God in the secrecy of conscience alone²⁴³ because sins of thought were considered beyond the knowledge of the ministers of the church.²⁴⁴ This clearly points out that there were clear changes in understanding of interiority in the 12th century, especially around the developments of confessional practices.²⁴⁵ Subsequently, what was conceived as ineffable and limited only to God was beginning to be articulated verbally to a priest. From such affirmation followed the description of the priest standing in God’s place and hence the penitent makes know his life to God through the priest. A change in the understanding of interiority and that of theology of penance clearly influence not only confessional practices but equally also the very idea of conscience.²⁴⁶

The auricular confession, thus, occupied a vital role in the history of Church and this practice paved way for a ‘fascination with exploring the inner space of human subjectivity.’ Through confession, as observes Kramer, Christians were encouraged to

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 49.

²⁴² For more details on authors who held similar views see *ibid.*, pp. 49ff.

²⁴³ Based on these teachings of Augustine, many theories and interpretations were developed on internal sins, healing them in conscience without priestly intervention and so on in medieval times. See *ibid.*, pp. 43ff.

²⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, p. 34. “For Augustine, the inscrutability of the human heart and the inevitable gap between words and what we intend to express through them are a result of original sin [...] There are indications of another view of language in Augustine’s thought, one which would have implications for twelfth-century semiotics and theology. The Augustinian solution for bridging the gap between sign and signifier is the Incarnation.”

²⁴⁵ Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood*, p. 50. See also Godman, *Paradoxes of Conscience*, p. 2.

²⁴⁶ Consider the declaration of *De vera et falsa penitentia* that said penitents make known life to God through priests and others like Bruno of Segni who exhorted people to pour out their hearts before God, because to confess to God is to confess to his vicars, that is, to bishops and priests. Cf. Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood*, pp. 51-52.

identify themselves not just with their public deeds but also with their private intentions, desires, fantasies, and dreams, which is linked to what we have discussed as conscience, morality and spirituality in general. “Behind this identification with internal experience lay the presumption of personal autonomy and of an ethics of intention. Sinners were required to confess intentions as well as actions because they were considered to be the responsible agents for all that they confessed and the morality of their actions was a product, at least in part, of their own intentions.”²⁴⁷

It is noteworthy that there was much insistence on the secrecy of confession and the priest was obliged to preserve the secrets at any cost:

let the priest be discreet and cautious that he may pour wine and oil into the wounds of the one injured after the manner of a skilful physician, carefully inquiring into the circumstances of the sinner and the sin, from the nature of which he may understand what kind of advice to give and what remedy to apply, making use of different experiments to heal the sick one. But let him exercise the greatest precaution that he does not in any degree by word, sign, or any other manner make known the sinner, but should he need more prudent counsel, let him seek it cautiously without any mention of the person. He who dares to reveal a sin confided to him in the tribunal of penance, we decree that he be not only deposed from the sacerdotal office but also relegated to a monastery of strict observance to do penance for the remainder of his life.²⁴⁸

Preservation of secret was insisted even much before the Lateran Council that made confessions an obligation. The inviolability of avowed secrets was explained by invoking God’s power, for priest “keeps your secrets not as himself, but as if they were revealed to God alone.”²⁴⁹ Any betrayal of trust was termed as mortal sin and the Pope Eugenius III promulgated the protection of confession secrets, under the threat of excommunication, in the Council of Reims in 1148.²⁵⁰

Having looked at how gradually private confession evolved over centuries, we can observe the major changes especially between ninth and thirteenth century: the penances

²⁴⁷ Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood*, p. 135.

²⁴⁸ *Canon 21 of Lateran Council IV of 1215*, in *ND*, p. 661.

²⁴⁹ These are the words of Robert Pullen who advised the pope on the need for preserving secrecy. Cf. Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood*, p. 52.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.* Eugenius III forbade bishops to exclude from communion those whom they knew, through confession, to be guilty of crimes. His stated reason was that they had obtained their knowledge ‘not like a judge but like God’. Godman, *Paradoxes of Conscience*, p. 53.

being lightened and made arbitrary, contrition becoming the essential element for the penitent and thus pushing penitential exercises into a subservient position, private confession, already accepted as a necessary part of the forgiveness of sins, was declared universally obligatory by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215; and the meaning of the priest's role was more carefully defined and its importance in the process of forgiveness radically enhanced.²⁵¹

5.2 Complete Confession

The concept of complete confession (*confessio integra*) was very much alive during the life time of Ignatius and certainly played a part in his scrupulosity. We know that around this time it was held that

only what is confessed, or what is inculpably forgotten, can be the matter subjected to the keys, and no pardon can be granted for a portion of sins unless all are pardoned. There can be no partial reconciliation to God, and the wilful omission of a single mortal sin, constituting the *confessio informis* or *dimidiata*, renders the whole confession invalid and unsacramental; in fact, receiving the sacrament thus irreverently is a new sin. No amount of contrition and of life-long penance self-imposed can wash away a sin thus concealed; every confession and communion is a fresh sin, and it were better for the penitent to live and die wholly without the sacrament.²⁵²

Such views, no doubt terrorized penitents who approached the confessional with a hope to relieve their anxiety. Making a clear distinction between mortal sin and venial sin had begun with the Church Fathers²⁵³ and as we have said earlier in confessionals this assumed greater importance because the penance varied according to the type of sins committed. In order not to be lacking in anything a well-prepared written confession was the best solution what all the penitents adopted.

Thoroughness and minute distinction was part of the practice because it was not few who held the view that “many deceive themselves in thinking that they have made

²⁵¹ Cf. Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, p. 16.

²⁵² Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, 348.

²⁵³ Lea records that it was Cyprian who classified sins into *gravissima delicta* – committed against God, and lesser sins committed against people. Origen divided sins into *ad mortem* and *ad damnum*, while St. Augustine was the first to talk of venial sins. See Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. II, pp. 235ff.

perfect confessions when they have not, and will find themselves plunged into hell while expecting to go to heaven.”²⁵⁴ Talking of the history of auricular confession, Lea confirms this about the confessors of the time in the following way: “as the system developed under the busy hands of the scholastic theologians, the interrogations grew more elaborate. All the sins were investigated in their minute particulars to determine the exact amount of guilty involved in every supposable case.”²⁵⁵ Therefore, the confession had to be complete and thorough. A meticulous probing was the common practice and the scope of the confessional was much broad:

all possible lapses from rectitude in every sphere of human activity were investigated and estimated and catalogued and defined with a minuteness that had never before been attempted by moralists, and huge books were compiled to afford the priest the necessary aid in pushing his inquiries. The Ten Commandments, the seven deadly sins, the five senses, the twelve articles of faith, the seven sacraments, the seven works of temporal mercy and the seven spiritual, were ransacked to find objects of inquiry, and then all classes and callings of men were successively reviewed and lists of questions were drawn up fitted for their several temptations and habitual transgressions.²⁵⁶

Thus, we see that in order to perform his functions properly the confessor had to push his inquiries into every detail – for, it would be a mortal sin for him to omit this duty!

5.3 Confession to Laity

The practice of confessing to companions in arms was an ancient practice that helped people to be at peace,²⁵⁷ especially before going into war where the return was not guaranteed. Here it is important to note that soldiers confessing to their comrades was a normal common practice and often they confessed before going for a battle. The theme of confession to laity is important to our discussion precisely because we want to look at the confessions of Ignatius as a soldier, before his conversion at Manresa. Notwithstanding the

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 352.

²⁵⁵ Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, p. 370.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 370-371.

²⁵⁷ Bachrach argues that lay-people confessing individually, especially the soldiers, was a long existing practice even in 8th century. See Bachrach, “Confession in the *Regnum*,” pp. 9-10.

various councils and regulations, there are evidence to show that confessing to lay people was a matter of living interest even in sixteenth century.²⁵⁸

The process of verbally revealing secrets was so important that the penitent was to confess to a lay person when a priest was unavailable, and scholars point out that the revelation of secrets represents the first theoretical substantiation of lay confession.²⁵⁹ Despite the 1215 decree, public confession was much more widespread and private confession took time to set in. Though the Lateran council made private confession a norm, owing to many practical difficulties like availability of priests and even parishes,²⁶⁰ not everyone was practicing it immediately. Lea, talking about confession to laypeople, points out that it was an acceptable practice as early as seventh century, for people were accustomed to apply even to women for penance. It is worth noting that even in the fourteenth century “the synod of Cahors approves the death-bed confession to laymen and women, not that they can absolve, but that the reverence thus shown for the sacrament enables the priest to absolve the sinner after his death – a highly irregular way of reconciling to existing tenets what was evidently a prevailing custom.”²⁶¹

It is true that there were conflicting views on confessing to lay people, and even confession in general, like, “for it is asked first, whether through confession of the heart alone sin is forgiven, without satisfaction and oral confession; secondly, whether it is enough for one to confess to God alone without the priest; thirdly, whether confession made to a layman who is a believer is of profit.”²⁶² Notwithstanding the difference of opinion on

²⁵⁸ Many believed that death-bed confession to and absolution from a layman are valid and there was no sin involved and this was the continuation of the long existing practice. In 1584 Bishop Angles speaks of it as laudable but unnecessary. Lea argues that the bulls of Popes Paul IV, Sixtus V, Clement VIII and Benedict XIV all condemning such practices and to be subjected to the Inquisition indicated the existence of such practice. Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, pp. 225-226.

²⁵⁹ It must be kept in mind that for all these interpretations, the three resurrections in the gospels are reference point because the three resuscitations signify the three different ways of sinning and appropriate form of repenting. Cf. Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood*, pp. 41ff.

²⁶⁰ Lea cites different examples to show the real picture of this time. “In 1213, just before confession was rendered obligatory on all Christians, the city of Montpellier had but one church in which the sacrament of penitence could be administered, and as late as 1247, when Ypres boasted of two hundred thousand inhabitants, it had but four parish churches.” Lea, *Auricular Confession* vol. I, p. 205.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

²⁶² See Peter Lombard, *The Four Books of the Sentences*, 4, as quoted in Paul Palmer (ed.), *Sacraments and Forgiveness*, Westminster: The Newman Press, 1959, p. 193.

this, Peter Lombard held the view that the moment the penitent has intention in his heart, forgiveness is granted.²⁶³ On confessing to a layman Lombard's view is important in our discussion because he was of the opinion that both venial and mortal sins should be confessed first to God and then to a priest, and the penitent should look for an experienced priest who can counsel appropriate remedies, and in case there are no priests available then confession can be made to a neighbour or a comrade. For, this theologian argued:

from the testimony already seen it is certain that it is not enough to confess to God alone without confession and the judgement of the priest, nor is he truly humble and penitent who does not desire to seek the priest's judgement. But it is not equally profitable to confess to one's companion or neighbour, at least when no priest is available? By way of reply can we surely say that the scrutiny of the priest must be sought zealously, because God has granted priests the power of binding and loosing; and so, whom they forgive, God also forgives. But if no priest is available, confession is to be made to one's companion or neighbour... and even if the one to whom he confesses has not the power of loosing, he who confesses his crime to a companion will still be worthy of pardon because of his desire of the priest.²⁶⁴

There were also similar views of other theologians who held that it suffices to confess minor sins to a comrade, but the graver ones to a priest, except in extreme necessity.²⁶⁵

We also see that Thomas Aquinas had taught in similar line about confessing to laymen:

in case of necessity even a layman may take the place of a priest, and hear a person's confession and in the sacrament of Penance there is not only something on the part of the minister, viz. the absolution and imposition of satisfaction, but also something on the part of the recipient, which is also essential to the sacrament, viz. contrition and confession [...]. When there is reason for urgency, the penitent should fulfil his own part, by being contrite and confessing to whom he can; and although this person cannot perfect the sacrament so as to fulfil the part of the priest by giving absolution, yet this defect is supplied by the High Priest.²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 194.

²⁶⁵ Hugh of St. Victor was of this opinion, but there were divided opinion on this matter. See Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, pp. 220-221.

²⁶⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Q. 8, Article 2, as quoted in Joseph Murray Abraham, "The Sacrament of Confession in Ignatian Spirituality," *Ignis*, 2003/1, pp. 11-12.

This should be contrasted with the view of the early Church which held the view that only three grave sins – heresy, infidelity and Judaism – to be confessed to a priest.²⁶⁷ This would mean that not always were there unanimity among theologians on this subject.

Thus, we see that it is characteristic of 12th century when Church began to lay greater emphasis on the penitent's state of mind – whether or not the sinner was truly contrite – taking a distance from earlier view of penitentials where the chief concern was imposing works of satisfaction. Some scholars would also argue that the imposition of confession thus paved way for the emergence of the modern sense of selfhood as well as a sense of responsibility for one's actions, intentions, and thoughts. We can observe that when confession required the penitent to reflect on thoughts and intentions that constituted inwardness, it subsequently deepened a sense of interiority as well as of holding the penitent responsible for his/her thoughts, intentions and actions. Building on such a solid base and by what some term as 'individualizing the Christian subject,'²⁶⁸ confession transformed the penitent's own soul into an instrument of confinement. From this we can also deduce that the sense of conscience relies much on these concepts, and how confession was projected as a tool that fostered introspection and self-awareness rather than mere guilt. Be it the view that the development around 1215 canon paved way or led to the culmination of a 'concern for self-examination' or what others called confessional literature as one of the spearheads of self-awareness – both have bearing on our present study. Confession, either as an imposed self-disciplinary practice or as an exercise in self-reflection, changed the course of history in terms of conscience, moral and spiritual life for many generations that followed.²⁶⁹

The next major development in the theology of confession takes place in the council of Trent, where some members of the newly founded Order of Ignatius contributed much,

²⁶⁷ Bede argues in favour of this since God himself corrects and cures other vices in us. See Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. II, pp. 236ff.

²⁶⁸ Kramer points to the works of John Bossy and Robert van Krieken. See Kramer, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood*, pp. 12-14.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

especially in area of sacraments. Keeping in line with the earlier teachings, the Council of Trent reaffirmed the necessity of yearly confession in the following manner:

wherefore, whereas the secret sacramental confession, which was in use from the beginning in holy Church, and is still also in use, has always been commended by the most holy and the most ancient Fathers with a great and unanimous consent, the vain calumny of those is manifestly refuted, who are not ashamed to teach, that confession is alien from the divine command, [...] but that the precept of confession should be complied with, at least once a year, by all and each, when they have attained to years of discretion. [...] to the great benefit of the souls of the faithful, now observed, of confessing at that most sacred and most acceptable time of Lent – a custom which this holy Synod most highly approves of and embraces, as pious and worthy of being retained.²⁷⁰

Thus, we see, the Council of Trent endorses the views of the previous councils regarding confession, clearly indicating that during the time of Ignatius confession had not been much different from earlier centuries i.e. confession to comrades as well as private confession to priests where part of the tradition of the Church. This would lead us to a clearer understanding of the personal experience of Ignatius of confession in his conversion days. But before that we would like to spell out what is meant by morality, especially in relation to spirituality and confession.

6 Ignatius' Experience of Confession

After quickly going over the general principles of the prevalent principles and practices of confession, we saw how moral theology came to be a separate discipline. We now turn our attention to the confession experience of Ignatius, especially in his early conversion days, in order to better situate his experience of reconciliation and how this in turn is linked to how he perceived conscience and morality. “Y venido el día que se esperaba la batería, él se confesó con uno de aquellos sus compañeros en las armas” [*Auto.* 1], and “y llegando el día de S. Juan, por los médicos tener poca confianza de su salud, fue aconsejado que se confesase; y así, recibiendo los sacramentos, la víspera de San Pedro y San Pablo” [*Auto.* 3] are the two early confession accounts that reveal Inigo's encounter with this sacrament and we know that confession continued to be a part of his regular spiritual practices.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ *Council of Trent*, Ch. V.

²⁷¹ After the general confession at Montserrat Ignatius regularly confessed as he narrates in the *Auto.* [21-23]. We also know that he regularly confessed while he was in Rome.

During his stay at Manresa Inigo made a general confession [*Auto.* 17] and he kept this as an integral part of his spiritual life when he says “perseveraba siempre en sus s3litas confesiones” [*Auto.* 21].²⁷² From such accounts we know that one of the most personal experiences of spirituality and morality was mediated through confessions and so we turn our attention to those experiences.

6.1 Confession to Comrades

In Pamplona Ignatius made his confession to a fellow soldier and in Loyola at the danger of death he confessed to priest and these were some of the many instances of confession in important moments of his life. For Ignatius the confession of sins was not optional but was essential both to express his contrition and to obtain forgiveness. He found it as the best way to calm his turbulent conscience as much as it did it evaluate his moral life.

Commenting on the confession of Ignatius to a companion, Tellechea says that the need to confess was very strong in him because by asking pardon, a person reassures himself and seeks to unburden himself:

la necesidad sacramental, no en la necesidad psicol3gica, casi biol3gica, de autoasegurarse que se implora perd3n y que se desea descargar la vida, no de complejos de culpabilidad – invento moderno – sino de pecados que pesaban sobre el alma con tanta solidez y seguridad como la coraza de hierro pesaba sobre los hombros. Reconocer ante otro sus pecados, y a3n m3s cuando ese otro es un laico, es el primer paso eficiente de una catarsis profunda, una manera de certificar el hondo deseo de perd3n y la disposici3n de hacer de nuestra parte lo posible para merecer misericordia. El gesto de I3igo es el clich3, un negativo, de la persuasi3n 3ntima de que dos llevan mejor el peso que aplasta a uno solo, un modo ciego de insertarse en la comuni3n de los santos. En la espera ansiosa de que hablasen las bombardas y culebrinas, I3igo volc3 su conciencia en su at3nito compa3ero de armas, quien pudo descubrir con asombro, m3s que gruesos pecados comunes y corrientes, facetas ocultas e impensadas del coraz3n de su orgulloso confidente.²⁷³

²⁷² Inigo drew much profit from confession, be it during interior turbulence or plagued by scruples or even in most uncertain moments, as he vouches. [*Auto.* 22, 23, 25, 27, 26].

²⁷³ Ignacio Tellechea Id3goras, *Ignacio de Loyola: Solo y a pie*, Salamanca: Ediciones S3gueme, 2002, p. 88.

As Tellechea rightly pointed out, the confession was unburdening of the weight of sin of whole life, it was laying bare the conscience on the face of a highly probable death, here of course more a spiritual death.

6.2 Ignatius at Montserrat: Confession to Priest

The confession of Ignatius at Montserrat assumes more significance for the fact that here he comes in contact with the long existing tradition, particularly that of Benedictines and their spirituality. It is after the short stay at Montserrat that Ignatius begins a deeper journey in conversion as well as proceeds to compose the *Spiritual Exercises* where he dealt with examination of conscience and confession.

Ignatius reaches Montserrat on 22 March of 1522 with the intention of making confession. The sanctuary of Montserrat was known for its ‘peregrinación de la penitencia’ and Ignatius chose to confess with a view to do penance for the sins that were haunting him. As was the common practice, Ignatius was a solitary pilgrim penitent²⁷⁴ looking for peace of mind and tranquillity of conscience. The shattered dreams at Pamplona and subsequent experiences at Loyola left him restless pushing him to the pilgrim way. The penitent pilgrims usually reached on foot, some even barefoot, on animals or some even on their knees carrying their offerings.²⁷⁵ Ignatius reached Montserrat on a mule,²⁷⁶ and he would have been welcomed by the friars and lead to the chapel as was the normal practice: “llegados al santuario se dirigían inmediatamente a la iglesia, en donde un monje o sacerdote les daba la bienvenida y los presentaba a la Virgen. Acto seguido ofrecían los dones personales o colectivos” and “cumplidos los primeros anhelos de la devoción, se procedía al alojamiento de los peregrinos.”²⁷⁷ Pedro de Burgos, the then abbot of the

²⁷⁴ “Las peregrinaciones de penitencia, colectivas, no abundaban; en cambio, eran muy frecuentes las individuales, que eran la admiración de los demás peregrinos y hasta de los custodios del santuario.” Anselm M. Albareda, *Historia de Montserrat*, Barcelona: Publicación de l’Abadía de Montserrat, 1974, p. 142

²⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁷⁶ “He also made arrangement with the confessor that he should give orders to have the mule collected, and that his sword and dagger should hang in the Church at the altar of Our Lady” [*Auto.* 17].

²⁷⁷ Albareda, *Historia de Montserrat*, p. 144.

monastery²⁷⁸ assigned Dom Juan Chanon as the confessor of Ignatius, since according to the custom it was the abbot who would assign a confessor for the penitents.²⁷⁹

His own words reveal that the confession of Ignatius lasted three days: “pues partido deste lugar, fuese, según su costumbre, pensando en sus propósitos; y llegando a Monserrate, después de hecha oración y concertado con el confesor, se confesó por escrito generalmente, y duro la confesión tres días” [*Auto.* 17]. This would be true because Ignatius’ stay in Montserrat would not have been more than three days,²⁸⁰ as by rule pilgrims were allowed to stay a maximum of three days: “tres días era el límite máximo permitido de estancia en el santuario. De este modo, por una parte, los peregrinos podían satisfacer su devoción y descansar de las fatigas del viaje, y por otra, se evitaban los abusos de la hospitalidad.” And normally these days were well made use: “los peregrinos empleaban los tres días de permanencia en el santuario en la práctica de actos cultos y de piedad, asistían a las funciones de la iglesia y se dedicaban a ganar las indulgencias concedidas por la Santa Sede a los cofrades y romeros de Montserrat.”²⁸¹

On the manner Ignatius confessed at Montserrat, Calveras throws more light on:

se confesó generalmente, es decir, hizo una confesión de toda su vida con la amplitud que suponen los confesionales, recorriendo todas las oraciones, acusándose de los pecados mortales y veniales y de las omisiones e imperfecciones, y añadiendo la confesión general por los pecados olvidados. Duró la confesión tres días, esto es dos para prepararse, insistiendo en el examen y el dolor y escribiendo ordenadamente los pecados y otro para leer lo escrito a los pies del confesor, en una o en varias veces.²⁸²

²⁷⁸ Pedro de Burgos was the abbot of the monastery from 1512 – 1536. Cf. *ibid.*, 79. And regarding the one who helped in confession as indeed being Chanon, Gabriel Álvarez says: “Este fue el Padre Fray Juan Chanones, Francés de Nación, Monge de aquel Monasterio, tenido y reverenciado por santo, de quien hoy día dura la memoria y fama de santidad en aquella casa.” Gabriel Álvarez, *Historia de la provincia de Aragón*, Barcelona, 1944, p. 7.

²⁷⁹ Albareda describes the tradition as follows: “cuando el abad se enteraba de ello, mandaba a algún monje confesor, facultado por la Santa Sede, como todos nuestros penitenciaros, para absolver o permutar votos y, en este caso concreto, hasta fuera de la confesión.” Albareda, *Historia de Montserrat*, p. 144.

²⁸⁰ Regarding the confession, Gabriel Álvarez, writing the history of Aragon province at the end of 16th century, also says it was for three days: “con este Padre, pues, se confiesa generalmente de toda su vida por escrito. Dura la confesión tres días hecha con mucha consideración y cuidado; tanto era el que tenía, como prudente, de asegurar el negocio de mayor calidad y sustancia que hay en el mundo; asentando sólidos fundamentos al edificio de la nueva vida.” Álvarez, *Historia de la provincia*, p. 7.

²⁸¹ Albareda, *Historia de Montserrat*, p. 148.

²⁸² José Calveras, “Los Confesionales y los Ejercicios de san Ignacio,” in *AHSI* 17 (1948) pp. 51-101, here p. 61.

As we have already seen, manuals of confession were the best companion of a penitent as they clearly guided him or her to make a full confession and there were many manuals that listed the probable sins. As such, the ‘*confesionales*’²⁸³ that catalogued sins were available in Latin and local languages as printing technology then had already begun to grow in and around Montserrat.

Scholars are of the view that Ignatius would have made use of such manuals during his conversions, and they would have played a decisive role not only to calm his conscience but in the entire process of conversion as well. Calveras in his study on the confessionals maintains that Ignatius would have used some of such manuals²⁸⁴ as well as *Ejercitatorio de la vida espiritual* of Cisneros, not only for his confessions but as source of inspiration, interpretation or even to draw ideas for the *Exercises*.²⁸⁵ The *confesionales* had such an influence in his life that he, later as a general, would recommend the use of the same to scholastics in the Society of Jesus.²⁸⁶ The general themes that are dealt in these confessionals are a catalogue of sins, mortal/capital sins, Commandments of the Lord, works of mercy, theological virtues, powers of the soul, sacraments, sins against the Holy

²⁸³ Calveras defines ‘confesionales’ in the following way: “entendemos por ‘confesionales’ los manuales de confesión, que con la invención de la imprenta se difundieron en latín y en lengua vulgar por todos los países de Europa, para ayudar a penitentes y confesores en la complicada tarea que representaba entonces la confesión anual o general; todos con un contenido fundamental común, la lista o catálogo de los pecados que se pueden cometer, y más o menos complementos, según que atendiesen preferentemente a la utilidad del confesor o del penitente.” *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52. They were known in different names “[...] tomaron diversos nombres además de *Confessionale*, a saber, *Summa confessoris*, *confessorum*, *poenitentialis*, *Manuale*, *Directorium*, *Instructio*, *Interrogatorium*, *Ordo*, *modus*, *formula confessionis*, *confitendi*, etc. y en vulgar *Confesional*, *Confesionario*, *Arte de confesar o de confesión*, *Modo práctico*, *breve*, *fácil*, *Directorio*, *Manual*, etc.” Note 1 on p. 51.

²⁸⁴ Calveras lists six such confessionals having influenced Ignatius before 1541 – not necessarily for his confession but most certainly in the process of conversion and in his spiritual growth, and they are: *Confesión breve y muy útil, compuesto por el Reverendo señor don Andrés, obispo magarensi, penitenciario de la sancta Iglesia de Roma, Arte de confesión breve e mucho provechosa asi para el confesor como para el penitente*, *Confesional del Tostado*, *Confesionario del Maestro Pedro Ciruelo nuevamente corregido*, *Arte de bien confesar o para bien confesar* and *La suma de confesión llamada Defecerunt de fray Antonio arzobispo de Florencia de la orden de los predicadores*. Calveras, “Confesionales,” pp. 54-57.

²⁸⁵ Today many agree that Ignatius for sure had access to *Ejercitatorio de la vida espiritual*, a work by García de Cisneros and that he made notes from this during his stay at Manresa. See Javier Melloni, *Los ejercicios espirituales: un eslabón en la tradición de Occidente*, Barcelona: Cristianisme i Justícia, 1998. See also Anselmo M. Albareda, “Intorno alla scuola di orazione Metodica Stabilita a Montserrat dall’abate Garsias Jiménez de Cisneros,” in *AHSI* 25 (1956) pp. 254-316.

²⁸⁶ See *Const.* [406, 407]; Calveras, “Confesionales,” pp. 52-53.

Spirit, etc.²⁸⁷ we know that during this period it was part of the duty of the confessor to investigate diligently and probe thoroughly about all the circumstances of sin.

As it was a general confession of three days, it was well-prepared, going over all the catechism and articles of faith; it was thorough so as not to leave out any sins. Examination of conscience was an important element of such confessions as it is clear from an analysis of the confessionals. The *confesional* of Andrés de Escobar, for example, spells out in detail how to examine thoughts, words and deeds²⁸⁸ as well as the way to confess:

todos los que queréis confesar signaros heis de la señal de la santa cruz, diciendo los hombres: Yo, pecador, las mujeres: Yo, pecadora, me confieso a Dios todopoderoso, y a la bienaventurada Virgen Santa María, e a todos los santos y santas de la corte del cielo, e a ti, Padre espiritual, que pequé mucho desde la hora en que comencé a pecar fasta el presente día en que agora esto, mortal e criminal e venialmente, así por pensamiento, consentimiento, delectación, consejo, palabra, uso e omisión, como por obra, contra Dios Padre todopoderoso por enfermedad de la natura, contra su Fijo por ignorancia y ceguedad del anima, contra el Espíritu Santo por malicia, obstinación, desesperación e voluntariosa costumbre, codicia y amor desordenado de pecar; e confieso haber pecado contra mu Dios, así por palabra e pensamiento, como por obra e omisión.²⁸⁹

Another *confesional* instructed how to confess about the whole life based on various stages of life:

examen de los pecados por edades, lugares y personas. Se puede hacer la discusión desta forma, si quiere facer la confesión general, o especial de aquel año, o desde que se confesó. Primeramente para te confesar generalmente has de pensar en donde estabas cuando era pequeño de edad de seis años, o antes si conocías qué era bien o mal, y con cuales mozos y personas conversabas, y qué pecados en tal edad hacías, y con cuales compañías dormías; que ahí comienzan los mozos los pecados y jamás los confiesan alegando ignorancia, diciendo que aún no tenían lleno juicio de lo que hacían, y con esto no son escudos, mayormente si cuando hacían las tales cosa se ascondían de los otros que no lo viesan.²⁹⁰

Thus, when Ignatius confessed at Montserrat at the feet of dom Jean Chanon,²⁹¹ he would certainly have made use of the confessionals to examine his conscience. During the first

²⁸⁷ Calveras, "Confesionales," p. 54.

²⁸⁸ It talks of 'del pensamiento, de la habla y de la obra.'

²⁸⁹ From *Confesión breve del Maestro Andrés de Escobar*, as quoted in Calveras, "Confesionales," p. 95.

²⁹⁰ From *Arte para bien confesar*, as quoted in Calveras, "Confesionales," p. 83.

²⁹¹ Standing at the feet was the way to make confession in the time of Ignatius. "debe ir a los pies del confesor, escogiendo el más provechoso y discreto" and "y pongas de rodillas a sus pies, de manera que no vea al confesor en el rostro." See Calveras, "Confesionales," p. 84.

two days he would have gone through his entire life – even over things he had confessed earlier – and on the third day confessed all his ‘vanities’ and other sins of his youth. We, however, do not know for certain which model of confessional Ignatius would have used for his examination as there were as many as seven hundred possible enquiries.²⁹² In such context, Ignatius, would have examined himself thoroughly, prepared a detailed list of sins, written them down and confessed to the friar at Montserrat.

Another important aspect of the confession of Ignatius that can be inferred is the scrupulous distinction between mortal sin and venial sin. The importance of such differentiation can be gauged from the fact that the teaching of the time clearly said ‘no one can be saved if one dies in a state of mortal sin without confessing.’²⁹³ When Ignatius approached the confessional he would have been weighed down by such scruples. Ignatius felt the great need to have a complete confession of all the sins, mortal or venial as an absolute necessity, even after the weekly confession and communion. “Porque, aunque al general, que había hecho en Monserrate, había sido con asaz diligencia, y toda por escrito, como está dicho, todavía le parecía a las veces que algunas cosas no habían confesado, y esto le daba mucha aflicción; porque, aunque confesaba aquello, no quedaba satisfecho” [*Auto.* 21-22]. This again justifies the need for a detailed, well probed and integral confession.

6.3 The Confession of Ignatius and its Role in Conscience and Morality

From our analysis so far, we have seen that during the time of Ignatius there was no separate treatment on conscience as we understand today and, in this regard, the *confesional* and confessional practices played greater role. The ‘cases of conscience’ was a term

²⁹² One example of such classification would be of Bartholommeo de Chaimis who classified instruction for children, married folks, princes, magistrates, lawyers, physicians, surgeons, courtiers, citizens, merchants, traders, bankers, partners, brokers, artisans, druggists, goldsmiths, tavern-keepers, butchers, tailors, shoemakers, lenders and borrowers, bakers, actors, musicians, farmers, peasants, tax/toll-gatherers, rectors and administrators of hospitals and religious houses, clerics, simple priests, canons and incumbents of benefices, bishops and secular prelates, monks and friars. Cf. Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, p. 371.

²⁹³ “Absolver de los pecados y reconciliar con Dios para recuperar su gracia, de donde viene la liberación de las penas del infierno. [...] quien moría en pecado mortal no podía salvarse.” See Maryks, “Confesión,” p. 380.

referring to sins – often grave sins – that were reserved only for Bishops: there were sins which a priest was unable to grant absolution, and were either episcopal cases, as reserved to the Bishops, or papal, as reserved to the Holy See.²⁹⁴ A clear conscience often meant one had confessed all the sins – mortal and venial – with utmost care. When Ignatius was tormented by scruples in Manresa, we saw that the principal cause was his perplexity regarding the state of his confession – he was unsure if he had indeed confessed all the sins. Almost all the confessionals outlined the Ten Commandments as the measuring rod of a good conscience. “Por esta forma sigue la acusación de los diez mandamientos, de los siete pecados mortales.”²⁹⁵ Thus we see that for Ignatius the morality of an action was decisive in understanding conscience since it was based on the type of sins one had committed.

Some of the theologians of the time advocated constantly to confessions when they said: “así, digo, en las cosas dudosas cada uno debe consultar a quienes la Iglesia ha constituido para esto, como son los prelados, los predicadores y los confesores, peritos en la ley divina y humana. Son uno, en la Iglesia, ojos; otros, pies, etc.”²⁹⁶ When Ignatius talks of examining the conscience, primarily he would have had the understanding that such articles of faith would move a person to true conversion, a deepening of sense of reconciliation and consequently to a good conscience. These same faith articles were the principle part of the *confesional* during 16th century, underlining the fact that Ignatius associated conscience with these manuals for confession.

Calveras in his analysis of the *confesional* affirms that, somewhere during the course of writing the *Spiritual Exercises* Ignatius drew inspiration from these, as we have already mentioned.²⁹⁷ In the same line, commenting on the relation between *confesional* and Three Ways of Praying he makes the following affirmation:

²⁹⁴ Cf. Lea, *Auricular Confession*, vol. I, p. 312. The whole development of reserved cases is discussed in detail here from pp. 312-346.

²⁹⁵ Among the confessionals that we have discussed *Confesional de Tostado, arte para bien confesar, arte de confesión breve* list the ten commandments as starting point of confession. See Calveras, “Confesionales,” p. 55.

²⁹⁶ Francisco de Vitoria, as quoted in Marciano Vidal, *Historia de la teología moral* vol. 4/1, Madrid: Perpetuo Socorro, 2010, p. 338.

²⁹⁷ Calveras says, “no es esta relación clara y aprobada de los confesionales con la práctica de los Ejercicios la que pretendemos estudiar al presente, sino el posible influjo que ellos ejercieron en la composición del texto [...]. Porque puede haber fuentes de instrucción, donde el autor aprende las ideas o conocimientos

dice San Ignacio, que según que hombre halla en sí que más o menos estropea en cada mandamiento, así debe más o menos detenerse en la consideración y escrutinio del: y lo mismo se guarde en los pecados mortales. La consideración mira al mandamiento o al pecado mortal en sí para ver lo que está mandado o prohibido, y lo que es de supererogación y perfección en aquella materia, en orden a su perfecta inteligencia para mejor guardarlo o evitarlo; el escrutinio se refiere al examen de sí mismo, para considerar y pensar como lo he guardado y en qué he faltado, al objeto de acusarme, pedir venia y perdón y gracia a ayuda para enmendarme de las faltas hallada. Para estas dos partes del trabajo que se debe realizar en cada mandamiento o pecado mortal pudo inspirarse San Ignacio en los confesionales, pues mientras unos, dirigidos especialmente a los fieles, proponen en forma de acusación directa el catálogo de los pecados que se suelen cometer.²⁹⁸

Incidentally, the examination of conscience and the Three Ways of Praying were the first ‘proper exercises’ given by Ignatius to those who sought his help, “y estando en Alcalá se ejercitaba en dar ejercicios espirituales, y en declarar la doctrina cristiana” [*Auto.* 57]. We know that he also had taught the difference between mortal and venial sins, a distinction that was part of the *confesional*.

Ignatius clearly saw confession and the ways of praying as related to spirituality and morality. Based on such a vision Ignatius, and later other Jesuits, employed this tool in pastoral involvement, with much success in bringing people to lead good morally upright life or even to die in good conscience.²⁹⁹ The title “General examen of conscience in order to purify the soul and to make a better confession” [*Sp. Ex.* 32] clearly brings out the relation between such examination and confession. The eighteenth annotation prescribes the examen as well as confession for people who want to have ‘peace of soul’ and who are not necessarily making the full exercises.

Asimismo, según que se quisiere[n] disponer, se debe de dar a cada uno, [...] al que se quiere ayudar para se instruir y para llegar hasta cierto grado de contentar a su ánima, se puede dar el examen particular [24-31], y después el examen general [32-43]; juntamente, por media hora a la mañana, el modo de orar sobre los mandamientos, pecados mortales,

que elabora en su obra, fuentes de inspiración, donde traslada fragmentos más o menos retocados.” Calveras, “Confesionales,” p. 53.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

²⁹⁹ Ignatius and the first Jesuits used the confession as a means to help people, especially those who were at the point of death, anointing them after they confessed and had clear conscience. Confession was a favoured exercise of Ignatius to lead people to conversion and we see that the first Jesuits were deeply involved in this, following this same teaching of the time. Since no one could be save if he dies in mortal sin, anointing the sick was of great importance to Ignatius. He insisted with Pope Paul III to make it mandatory in Rome that the doctors visited the sick only if the patients had confessed prior to that. See José García de Castro, “Confesión,” in *DEI*, pp. 382-385, here 378.

etc. [238ss.], comendándole también la confesión de sus pecados de ocho en ocho días [...]. Esta manera es más propia para personas más rudas o sin letras, declarándoles cada mandamiento, y así de los pecados mortales, preceptos de la Iglesia, cinco sentidos y obras de misericordia. Asimismo, si el que da los ejercicios viere al que los recibe ser de poco subyector o de poca capacidad natural, de quien no se espera mucho fruto, más conveniente es darle algunos destes ejercicios leves hasta que se confiese de sus pecados; y después, dándole algunos exámenes de conciencia y orden de confesar más a menudo que solía, para se conservar en lo que ha ganado [*Sp. Ex.* 18].

We have many examples from the narration of the life of Ignatius, for example María de la Flor and others testified that Ignatius had taught such way of praying: “la dijo che le había de declarar las tres potencias, e ansi se las declara, e el mérito que se ganaba en la tentación, e del pecado venial como se facia mortal; e los diez mandamientos e circunstancias: e pecados mortales e los cinco sentidos, e circunstancias de todo esto.”³⁰⁰ The catechesis that Ignatius promoted talks of the Decalogue, the precepts of the Church, seven mortal sins, works of mercy, etc.³⁰¹ Therefore, with Calveras we too affirm that “en realidad, la primera manera de orar, con sus cuatro materias, constituye un curso breve de Ejercicios, que ampliado con los preceptos de la Iglesia y las obras de misericordia, junto con los exámenes de conciencia particular y general, se propone como Ejercicios de primer grado, o Ejercicios leves, en la anotación 18 [18].”³⁰²

When Ignatius talks of the examination of conscience he has in mind the morality of any action that has to be weighed against the articles of faith: the examination, therefore, in the first place is an evaluation of ones’ actions against the divine law – it is primarily an evaluation of one’s sins and failures. Within the dynamic of the First Week where the orientation is to elicit greater repentance and subsequently conversion, this examination is highly beneficial. And here we can see that the Ten Commandments assume an important role. In the same way, later in the *Exercises*, like in the section of Three Ways of Praying, Ignatius offers a way of praying with the Decalogue, the seven deadly sins, the three powers of the soul and the five senses of the body [*Sp. Ex.* 238] as moral essentials for a conversion of life. The sacrament of reconciliation aims at a repentance and conversion after

³⁰⁰ *Scripta de S. Ign.* I, 611.

³⁰¹ “La Summa delle prediche di M. Ignatio sopra la dottrina Xiana” in *Epp.* XII, pp. 666-673.

³⁰² José Calveras, *Los tres modos de orar en los ejercicios espirituales de san Ignacio*, Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1951, p. 50.

experiencing sorrow for sins committed.³⁰³ When the primary grace of the First Week is a conversion – arising out of an experience of being loved and forgiven – the emphasis on an examination that leads to confession is appropriate. However, this is only one aspect of the examen because outside the context of the Exercises, in daily life this would assume more than its preparatory role for confession.

7 Conclusion

From the twelfth century when the divorce of spirituality from theology took place, spiritual theology became a sub-discipline of theology, deriving principles from systematic and moral theology. Those who studied this subject aimed to guide faithful to ‘seek perfection’ in the confessional. The discipline of spiritual theology was deductive in method, prescriptive in character, and concerned primarily with the practice of personal prayer and asceticism. Manuals of spiritual theology were written mainly for confessors – and not the faithful – for guiding them, and such guidance took place at the confessional. In studying the confession of Ignatius and the practice of the daily examen during his early conversion days, we have seen that such manuals have played an important role. Ignatius encountered the practice of the examen within an existing tradition and he made the best use of it in various occasions to calm his turbulent conscience. The scrupulous confessions that he made brought him in touch with the meticulous confessionals of his time and drawing inspiration from such spiritual practices he later proposed the ‘General Examination of Conscience in order to purify the soul and to make a better confession.’

We have seen that the emphasis on clear distinction between mortal sins and venial sins was very much part of the tradition of the Church, having its origin in the early Christian centuries but continued with a new mandate from the Fourth Lateran council. This was very much in line with morality and spirituality that were transmitted to people and we have seen that there was an evolution from public confession to private individual confession with private penance. Over the centuries the confessional practices assumed substantial importance and then became an annual obligation, where a thorough

³⁰³ See Millán Romeral, *La penitencia hoy*, p. 278ff.

examination of one's life against the laws and commandments of the Lord. In such a context, the personal experience of Ignatius of evaluating his moral and spiritual life depended much on the faithful, meticulous and integral confession.

Subsequently, in the *Spiritual Exercises* Ignatius proposes the examination of conscience as a means to prepare oneself for a confession, within the context of the full exercise. His idea of conscience is therefore primarily, and not exclusively, in the context of sins and its forgiveness; he envisages the idea of conscience within the context of the sacrament of reconciliation. For him then, the morality of action becomes an important criteria for such an examination of conscience. From such a perspective it would seem that the examen that he proposes within the first week of the exercises then is primarily a moralistic exercise, aimed at the conversion of a sinner through the sacrament of confession.

However, the personal experiences and the divine illuminations shaped and radically altered what spirituality meant for Ignatius. The examen, in relation to Three ways of Praying, is also a sacramental act where morality and spirituality are involved. Ignatius transmitted a different moral and spiritual context when he proposed the daily examen to purify one's conscience and we shall study this in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

The Daily Examen for Ignatius and Some of His Companions

1 Introduction

The practice of the daily examen owes everything to the *Spiritual Exercises* for its origin, and all those who make the Exercises would practice it rigorously every day during the course of the Exercises and it is recommended after the completion of it. Ignatius proposes the examen in the First Week of the *Spiritual Exercises*, mainly as a preparation for confession. In the subsequent weeks it is also offered as a help in reviewing the prayer, and in removing the deep-rooted vices in a person. Ignatius from his personal experience in Manresa visualized the examen to be a help in getting rid of one's sins, and he proposes the particular examen to meticulously keep track of some fault that needed correction. We also know that Ignatius gathered his companions mainly by helping them with their spiritual

matters, particularly by making them go through the Spiritual Exercises and helping them gain clarity in their lives.

In this chapter, first we look at the practice of daily general examen as proposed in the writings of Ignatius. These better-known sources are the *Spiritual Exercises*, the *Autobiography* and the *Constitutions* which have been studied and so we take only a quick review first before we look at the lesser-known sources, namely the letters and instructions of Ignatius, the *Spiritual Diary*, the *Directorio de Ejercicios*, so as not to repeat what has already been said.¹ Our aim here would be to identify the Ignatian principles of examination, if and how they are related to the sacrament of reconciliation in these documents. As we have seen in the last chapter, the spirituality and morality of his time shaped his personal experience and, in this section, we hope to identify how they are reflected in this rich correspondence, in his diary or in the directory that was to act as a guide.

The companions of Ignatius, friends in the Lord, are immediate and valuable sources for verifying how the spirituality was transmitted from the author to others. In this study of the examen, the first companions such as Pedro Faber, Francisco Javier, Jerónimo Nadal, Juan Alfonso Polanco and Francisco Borja form an irreplaceable link in this history.² Hence, we would be looking at their writings and teachings knowing that they were the ones who had their hands on the pulse of Ignatius. Our attention will be turned to their spiritual writings, personal diary and other communications like exhortations, always with an eye on the practice of the examination of conscience.

In all the subsequent chapters, we propose to place the examen in two categories, one as moralistic and the other as spiritual. This division is based on what we have seen in our first chapter, i.e. when the focus of the examination of conscience is the faults, the omissions of law and a failure to keep the commandments of the Lord we term them as

¹ See the study of Adelson Araujo Santos, “*Mas él examinándolo bien...*”.

² Borja is strictly not among the first companions, however, keeping in mind the close relation he had with Ignatius and his role in the early Society we group him with the first companions. His other companions like Bobadilla, Simao Rodrigues or Codure have not left behind, as far as we know, nothing substantial on the practice of the examen and so they do not appear in our study.

moralistic. In such a case the focus is on the good or evil actions, the faults committed in the particular period of the examen, etc. There would also be instances when the focus of the examen is not just the morality of the action, instead the focus of this reflection goes beyond to look at the deeper dynamics involved in one's actions. When the focus is on such attitudes or the underlying subtle movements we term them as spiritual examen. Our hope is that by looking at all the instances of examen as perceived by Ignatius and some of the first companions we would be able to get a clearer picture of the entire ambit of daily examen right at the beginning of the Ignatian tradition.

2 The Examen in Ignatian Writings

The *Spiritual Exercises* presents the examination of conscience in the First Week, after the Principle and Foundation, under two categories, the particular examen and the general examen, with the titles “examen particular y cotidiano, contiene en sí tres tiempos y dos veces examinarse” and “examen general de consciencia para limpiarse y para mejor se confesar” respectively. At first a general statement about the three areas where the examination is applicable is given and it says “presupongo ser tres pensamientos en mí, es a saber, uno propio mío, el cual sale de mi mera libertad y querer, y otros dos, que vienen de fuera: el uno que viene del buen espíritu y el otro del malo” [32]. The detailed explanation for each of these three categories sets the tone for the examen, and the five points of the general examen are

Modo de hacer el examen general y contiene en sí cinco puntos.
 El primer punto es dar gracias a Dios nuestro Señor por los beneficios recibidos.
 El segundo, pedir gracia para conocer los pecados, y lanzallos.
 El tercero, demandar cuenta al ánima desde la hora que se levantó hasta el examen presente, de hora en hora o de tiempo en tiempo; y primero del pensamiento, y después de la palabra, y después de la obra, por la misma orden que se dijo en el examen particular [25].
 El cuarto, pedir perdón a Dios nuestro Señor de las faltas.
 El quinto, proponer enmienda con su gracia. *Pater noster* [43].

The section on the examen closes with an instruction on how to confess to receive the communion. The very title ‘General examination of conscience in order to purify the soul

and to make a better confession' orients the exercitant in the First Week³ where the focus is on ordering ones' life by getting rid of sins, and hence this section on the examen is associated with general confession.⁴ In the context of Month-long Exercises many advocate the examen in order to experience a great sense of peace.⁵ Other than this, we can also find allusions to examen where the principles of evaluation are applied⁶ and thus the review of prayer [77] and the First Way of praying [238ff.]⁷ are also based on the principle of reflection, just like the examen.

In the *Constitutions* Ignatius proposed the examen as part of the prayer routine for those in formation saying,

así que ultra de la confesión y comunión que cada ocho días se frecuentarán, y de la misa que oirán cada día, tendrán una hora, en la cual dirán las Horas de Nuestra Señora, y examinarán sus conciencias dos veces en el día, con algunas otras oraciones a devoción de cada uno hasta el cumplimiento de la hora que está dicha si no fuese cumplida. Y todo con orden y parecer de sus mayores, a los cuales se obligan de obedecer en lugar de Cristo nuestro Señor. [...] Otros [...] después de la misa tendrán su hora, en la cual dirán el rosario o corona de Nuestra Señora, con examinarse asimismo dos veces en el día, o algunas otras oraciones a su devoción, como está dicho de los escolares [342-344].

This 4th part of the *Constitutions* thus focuses on the spiritual formation of the scholastics and it takes care of the daily need for examining one's life. Interestingly, the *Constitutions* is silent on the requirement for formed Jesuits. Notwithstanding this, in the Society of Jesus, the examen has always been part of the daily routine.

Right at the outset, we would like to clarify the use of the term examen in our work since often there is a confusion in the terminology 'Daily Examen.' In the *Spiritual Exercises* Ignatius proposed the examen with the title "general examen to confess" and he qualified the particular examen [24] as *particular* and *daily* and the general examen does

³ See Pierre Émonet, "Primera semana," in *DEI*, pp. 1477-1480.

⁴ Araujo Santos talks of the triple objective of the examen, terming the daily examen as having a purgative, illuminative and unitive dimensions. See Adelson Araujo Santos, "Mas él examinándolo bien..." (*Au 27*): *el examen de conciencia en la espiritualidad ignaciana*, Bilbao-Santander-Madrid: Mensajero-Sal Terrae-UPCo, 2016. pp. 229ff.

⁵ See Santiago Arzubialde, *Ejercicios Espirituales de S. Ignacio: Historia y análisis*, Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 2009, p. 155.

⁶ See Michael Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2008, pp. 33ff.

⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 178-180.

not include such clear terms. It leaves no doubt that for Ignatius, the daily examen was the particular examen, with three times and two examen: morning resolution and noon and night examining one's conscience. Further in the *Exercises*, he took care to mention that the particular examen is meant for the entire duration of the Exercises: “la 4^a. el examen particular se haga para quitar defectos y negligencias sobre exercitios y additiones y ansi en la 2^a, 3^a y 4^a semana” [*Sp. Ex.* 90]. Similarly, with regard to the second week: “el examen particular después de comer y después de cenar se hará, sobre las faltas y negligencias cerca los exercitios y additiones, deste día y así en los que se siguen” [*Sp. Ex.* 160]. And the Third Week instruction reads, “el examen particular sobre los exercitios y additiones presentes se hará, así como se ha hecho en la semana pasada” [*Sp. Ex.* 207]. These clearly indicate the mind of Ignatius with regard to the practice of the particular examen, as an exercise meant to be done twice daily.

On the other hand, we know that in the Annotations Ignatius talked about the frequent use of the examen, be it for the less-talented or for those with pressing matters [*Sp. Ex.* 18, 19]. He proposed the Particular and General Examen with sole purpose of spiritual progress and in the recommendation to adapt the Exercises according to the capabilities of people, the examen has an important role. The *ejercicios leves* that are recommended for people of little natural capacity [*poca complicación/compleción*]⁸ also envisions the examen, as Ignatius explicitly states ‘give some lighter exercises [*ejercicios leves*] until the person has been to confession and afterwards some forms of examen of conscience can be given to maintain the progress made.’ Many have interpreted this openness of Ignatius as the key to understand the proliferation of the examen in daily life, outside the context of the Exercises. We also know that Ignatius himself practiced this when he gave some form of exercises to those who sought his help in his early conversion days, at Alcalá and Salamanca.

Further, the examen with its five-points has been interpreted as the ‘Daily Examen’ right from the early days of the Society of Jesus. Authors like Gil González Dávila, whom

⁸ See the comments of Cándido de Dalmasas where he points out the use of these terms in various manuscripts. Ignacio de Loyola, *Ejercicios espirituales* (introducción, texto, notas y vocabulario por Cándido de Dalmasas), 5^a ed., Santander: Sal Terrae, 1985, p. 50.

we will study shortly, and Fabio Fabi interpreted the five-point examen as the daily examen. The *Directorios* (D18, D24, D31) talk about the general examen as the daily examen and we have ample evidence in the early documents of the Society of Jesus that recommends the daily use of the five-point examen. Therefore, though Ignatius explicitly does not state the five-point examen [43] as the daily exercise, there existed, right from the inception of the Society of Jesus, the practice of twice examining one's conscience⁹ and when we refer to the daily examen we have this five-point examen in mind.

2.1 Letters of Ignatius and the Examen

The letters form a corpus of invaluable resource, not only because they are addressed to people of diverse nature and the emphasis and articulation of spiritual matters are adapted according to their needs, but due to the fact that they reveal the intimate thoughts of the author himself.¹⁰ The importance of the letters lies in the fact that they are, mostly, practical application of the spiritual principles of the Exercises, as Iparraguirre points out: “en las cartas se reflejan, desde un ángulo de vista más práctico, en sus aplicaciones reales y concretas, lo cual ayuda a penetrar más profundamente en aspectos que en los Ejercicios corren peligro de pasar inadvertidos o al menos no se descubren tan fácilmente.”¹¹ The letters and instructions by Ignatius throw much light to reveal his mind on the practice of examen as they deal with different circumstances over a number of years.¹² We take a look at them in order to deepen the idea of the examen in daily life.

⁹ We will deal with this again in our fifth chapter when we analyse in detail the documents like *Regulae*, *Directorios* and the decrees of the General Congregations. See especially the concluding remarks in our chapter 5.

¹⁰ With regard to the importance of letters Iparraguirre says, “basta conocer un poco la rica personalidad de San Ignacio [...] para deducir la importancia que necesariamente han de tener documentos de la índole de las cartas, en que se va desgranando día a día lo más íntimo y vital de la persona humana y en que se van tratando y resolviendo los asuntos que forman la trama de la vida de un hombre. Porque en las cartas se transparenta el alma con sus reacciones y anhelos, se descubren los resortes más íntimos de la personalidad, sus alegrías y tristezas, sus luchas e inquietudes. Por esta razón, a través de estas páginas se puede pulsar el latido humano de San Ignacio y contemplar sus reacciones más personales y propias.” Ignacio Iparraguirre in his introduction to the letters in *Obras*, p. 633.

¹¹ Iparraguirre, in *Obras*, p. 635.

¹² The first letter was written in 1524 from Barcelona and the last one in Rome at the end of July, 1556. See *Obras*, pp. 651, 1001.

Ignatius communicated with other members of the Society through letters and he instructed and guided them on their work. The whole correspondence of Ignatius can be divided into four major groups namely 1) Family and Friends, 2) Members of Nobility, 3) Church Hierarchy, and 4) Jesuits.¹³ From among more than seven thousand letters that he wrote, we focus on that which deal with spiritual matters, either addressed to individuals or to groups/communities. And here we analyse the letters that put forward the examen in order to see what role the examination of conscience enjoys in relations to spiritual life.¹⁴

2.1.1 Letter 1899, to Joanni Pelletario

Through this letter Ignatius gave instructions on how to proceed in the Society with regard to choices of ministries and presented the guiding principles for houses of the Society.

Tre cose pare si debbiano pretender in Napoli una, che se conseruino et augmentino quelli della Compagnia in spirito, lettere et numero; altra, che s'attenda alla edification della città, et frutto spirituale di quella; altra, che si stabilischano et augmentino le cose temporali del nouo colleggio, acciò nella prima et seconda parte sia più seruito il Signore. La primera parte, che tocca a quelli della Compagnia, è come fondamento dell altre, perchè quanto saranno migliori loro, saranno etiamdio più idonei acciò siano accettati d'Iddio per instrumenti dell edificatione de quelli di fuori et della perpetuità della fondatione. Primo. Adunque ognivno, rettificando la sua intentione in modo che totalmente, quaerat, non quae sua sunt, sed quae Jesu Xpi. se sforzi de pigliare grandi propositi et desiderii d. essere uero et fidele seruo de Dio, et render buon conto di se in ogni cosa che li serà comessa, con uera abnegatione della propria uoluntà et giudicio, sottomettendose totalmente al gouerno de Dio per mezzo della sancta obedientia, hor siano adoperati in cose alte, hor in cose basse; et facciano orationi feruenti quanto potranno per ottener questa gratia dal donatore d'ogni bene: et il capo le dia questi ricordi alle uolte. 2.o. S'osserui quanto si potrà l'ordine et modo de questa casa, specialmente nel confessar e communicar ogni otto di et essaminar la concientia, et sentir missa in cassa (s. haueranno capella, o fuori se parerà espediente) ogni di, et nel essercitio dell'obedientia, et non praticar con forastieri, se non conforme all'ordine che sarà donato per il rector, il quale uedrà quanto si debbia comettere ad ogniuno per edificar ad altri senza periculo di se.¹⁵

¹³ Cf. José García de Castro, "Cartas" in *DEI*, pp. 301-302.

¹⁴ From among the letters we choose those which deal with spiritual life, matters like obedience, perfection in religious life, etc. The *Monumenta* does not classify the letters under such headings. There are no formal division of letters other than this large groups as García de Castro points out. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 304.

¹⁵ *Epp.*, III, Letter 1899, pp. 542-543.

This instruction, given in 1551, underlines the important role of the examen in all the colleges of the Society, as part of the formation program. The examen that is referred here is moralistic in its focus as it treats the daily practice like in the *Spiritual Exercises* [32].

2.1.2 Letter 5174, to Ponce Cogordan

In this letter addressed to Fr. Ponce Cogordan, Ignatius instructs him on how to proceed with the task of reforming the monastery of Arta Cella in France.

Comiençe á ganar crèdito, así en conversaciones espirituales con gentileshombres y otras personas, como con visitar hospitales y alguna obra pía, si ay. Visite las monjas con mucho amor, dándoles á entender que el cardenal lo envió para consolarlas espiritualmente. [...] Quando aurá ganado crédito, y conocidas las ánimas de las monjas y su vida pasada y errores, diestramente començará la reformación; y para esto conocerá el confessor suyo quién es; y si es persona que no le puede ayudar, le aconseje y haga que no las visite por algún tiempo, sino que las deje estar hasta que él le hable; y procure tener su amistad. [...] Induzirlas principalmente á confessarse y comunicarse, y particularmente hazer quanto pudiere á que algunas se confiesen generalmente, ganando indulgencia plenaria, porque aquellas puedan ser exemplo á las otras. Ayudarlas con exámenes de consciencia y con ejercicios espirituales, specialmente al principio con los de la primera semana, y dejarles algunos modos de orar conuientes á cada una. Procure con destreza y charidad de hazérselas confidentes á descubrir su alma y deffectos, y hazérselos conocer por uía que sientan que lo haze por charidad y amor y bien suyo.¹⁶

The letter underlines the importance of prudence on the part of the spiritual guide and recommends the use of the examen. Here the practice of examen that is recommended is as a help in general confession aimed at purification of oneself. As clearly stated in the letter, the mind of Ignatius is the reform of the life of the nuns and the objective is the transformation of life in general. The reference to the first week of the *Exercises* in a clear indication that the objective is to purify them from their sins and so we categorize it under moralistic examen.

2.1.3 Letter 3, To Francisco de Borja

In the instructions given to Borja, Ignatius underlined the importance of frequent reception of Communion. Reception of frequent communion was dear to Ignatius as we

¹⁶ *Epp.* VIII, Letter 5174, pp. 395-397.

find him encouraging people in this regard already in his early conversion days.¹⁷ Through this letter Ignatius encourages Borja who was in his initial conversion days to continue the practice without any scruples and to use the examen as a tool to overcome scrupulosity.

Aunque de esto no se puede dar regla universal, que cuadre á todos igualmente, pues la frecuente comunión, que para unos sería provechosa, y agradaría á Dios, para otros podría ser dañosa é injuriosa á la divina Majestad; más que el recibir el santísimo sacramento del altar á menudo, de suyo es santa y bendita obra, y así se debe aconsejar cuando hay la disposición y aparejo en el alma que le ha de tomar, cual le pide este celestial y divino manjar; y que este aparejo se debe conocer por un examen de la conciencia desengañada con luz, y limpia de pasión de amor propio, porque no tanga por aparejo el que no lo es, ni tampoco tiemble donde no hay que temer, privándose por indiscretos miedos de un tan suave y provechoso pan de vida. Porque es un error presumir sentaros á la mesa del celestial convite, no siendo llamado del Señor, y también lo es rechazar el alma la salud y vida cuando se ve con necesidad y que Dios le convida, pues el primero peca de arrogancia, y el segundo de pusilánimo; y por humanos respetos, y por no trabajar en aparejarse, se priva de la gracia del santísimo sacramento; y dábale luego reglas y arancel para no errar. La primera regla era, que la intención sea pura y recta en el que ha de frecuentar el santísimo sacramento. La 2^a el consejo del Padre espiritual y confesor escogido. La 3^a el aprovechamiento que el alma siente en crecer [en] las virtudes, especialmente en la caridad, humildad, misericordia y devoción [...] se atrevía á aconsejarle que, confiado de la misericordia de Dios N.S., y animado con las que hasta entonces había recibido de su bendita mano, frecuentase el uso del santísimo sacramento; porque esperaba que no sería esto sin mucho fruto de su alma y de otras que con su imitación se animarían á la misma virtud.¹⁸

It is very clear from the way Ignatius describes the focus is the morality of the action and Ignatius wants to calm the conscience of Borja. The examen that is talked about is moralistic in its focus. In this instruction regarding the reception of communion, Ignatius expresses his mind on the use of examen to choose what is according to the conscience. While saying that for some the frequent reception of communion may be good, he maintains that for others it may not be so. The criterion of ‘preparedness of the soul’, according to Ignatius, is one that is made clean of self-love and this is the aim of the examen in the First Week of the Exercises as well. So here the examen that is talked about is one to prepare for confession before receiving communion and hence has a moralistic tone. It is also to be

¹⁷ During his stay at Alcalá he helped people with spiritual matters, teaching them Christian doctrine and helping them to prepare for confession. Cf. *Auto.* 57. Confession was central to the ministries of the Society, as clearly states the Formula of the Institute. See also Maryks, “Confesión” in *DEI*, pp. 378-381.

¹⁸ *Epp.*, XII Appendix I, Letter 3, pp. 218-219.

noted that for choosing one way or the other of the disposition of the soul, the rules given are linked to the rules of the discernment.

Many of the letters that Ignatius wrote were addressed to individuals who needed guidance and clarity in their personal life. Ignatius also wrote to Jesuits while they were involved in their mission, be it in the council of Trent or in remote terrains of India. Among the many things that Ignatius recommended, the examen stands out as a daily practice in the daily routine.

2.1.4 Letter 123, to Those in Trent

Ignatius wrote a letter to the Jesuits at the Council of Trent to urge them to involve in works of charity while being engaged in theological discussions and to keep oneself free of all attachment through the faithful practice of the examen. The suggestions that Ignatius made included spiritual conversation,¹⁹ helping people in need and working in hospitals.²⁰

Tomaremos una hora á la noche entre todos para comunicar lo que se a hecho en el día, y lo que se debe pretender para el que viene. En las cosas passadas ó en las por venir conuernemos á uotos ó de otra manera. Uno una noche ruega a todos los otros para que le corrijan en todo lo que les pareciere; y el que así fuere corregido no replique, si no le dixeren que dé razón de la causa, por la qual a sido corregido. El segundo haga lo mesmo otra noche y así consequenter, para ayudarse todos en maior caridad y en maoir buen odor de todas partes. A la mañana proponer, y dos uezes examinar nos en el día. Esta orden se comience dentro de cinco días después que fuéremos en Trento. Amen.²¹

The daily examen is proposed as a means to correct oneself of any errors in conduct as well as to grow in virtues. And making the resolution in the morning is part of the particular

¹⁹ “Primero. Así como en conuersar y tractar con muchas personas para la salud y prouecho spiritual de las ánimas con fauor diuino mucho se gana, por el contrario en la tal conuersación, si no somos uigilantes y fauorecidos del Señor nuestro, se pierde mucho de nuestra parte, y á las uezes de todas [...]. Sería tardo en hablar, considerado y amoroso, maiormente çerca definir las cosas que se tractan ó son tractables en el concilio. S[er]í[a] tardo en hablar, ayudá[ndome] en el oír, quieto para sentir y conoçer los entendimientos, affectos y uoluntades de los que hablan, para mejor responder ó callar.” *Epp.* I, Letter 123, pp. 386-387.

²⁰ “A maior gloria de Dios N.S. lo que principalmente en esta jornada de Trento se pretende por nosotros, procurando estar junctos en alguna honesta parte, es predicar, confessar y leer, enseñando á muchachos, dando exemplo, uisitando pobres en hospitales, y exhortando á los próximos, según que cada uno se hallare con este ó con aquel talento para mouer las personas que pudiéremos á deuotión y oratión, para que todos ruego[u]em y roguemos á Dios N.S., que su diuina magestad se digne infundir su spíritu diuino en todos los que tractaren las materias, que á tan alta congregación pertenecen, para que el Spíritu santo con maior abundancia de dones y gracias descienda en el tal concilio.” *Ibid.*, pp. 387-388.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 388.

examen [*Sp. Ex.* 24], and, so by reminding these companions of the importance of particular examen Ignatius reiterates the role of examen in overall growth and correction.

2.1.5 Letter 1854, to Antonio Brandano

In this classical letter on attitude towards study and prayer written in 1551, Ignatius clearly states that the examen is part of the daily spiritual practices, no matter how short the time allotted for it.

Estas son las cosas de que un scholar de la Compañía desea ser informado según lo que parece á nuestro Padre. Quanto se dará á la oración, estando en un collegio aprendiendo, y quanto se dará al conuersar los hermanos, no poniendo en estas dos cosas el rettor limitación. Si interpondrá la missa algunos días ó la dirá en todos, aunque sea algún impedimento para los estudios [...]. En qué cosas se exercitará más meditando, que sean más al propósito de la nuestra uocación. Si en sus confessions descenderá á imperfecciones muy particulares, ó dirá las mayores, para que la confesión sea breue. Si confessare á algunos hermanos, si á ellos se harán preguntas, aunque no sean de peccado, y en qué casos pediría del penitente licentia para que de lo confessado informasse al superior. [...] attento el fin del studio, por el qual no pueden los scholares tener largas meditaciones, allende de los exercitios que tienen para la virtud, que son, oyr missa cada día, una hora para rezar y examen de conciencia, confessar y comulgar cada ocho días, se pueden exercitar en buscar la presencia de nuestro Señor en todas las cosas, como en el conuersar con alguno, andar, uer, gustar, oyr, entender, y en todo lo que hiziéremos, pues es verdad que está su diuina magestad por presencia, potencia y essentia en todas las cosas.²²

In this letter the concern of Ignatius is more about the duration of prayer and so the type of examen that one needs to practice does not get attention. However, the examen is presented as an integral part of one's daily spiritual activities and this is a key factor as many other documents that deal with the duration of prayer and giving importance to the daily examen.²³ The overall emphasis is on examen along with confession and so we term this as a moralistic type of examen.

²² *Epp.*, III, Letter 1854, pp. 506ff.

²³ In the later section where we deal with the rules of the Society, more examples will be analysed.

2.1.6 Letter 24, to Those in Mission (*sociis ad laborandum missis*)

In this letter written in 1552 Ignatius urges all those involved in mission to keep three things in mind: the first concerning oneself, the second of the neighbour, and the third about the Society in which one is a member. Ignatius says,

nel primo, rispetto a sè isteso, procuri di non dimenticarsi di sè per attendere agli altri, non volendo far vn minimo peccato per tutto il guadagno spirituale possibile, nè anche metendosi in pericolo; per ilchè gioua non praticar se non poco et in publico con persone, da quali probabilmente si douessi temer, et abstenendosi generalmente de l. huomo esteriore, et considerando le creature, non come belle o gratiose, ma come bagnate nel sangue de X.o., imagine de Dio, tempio del santo Spirito etc.. Per defendersi etiam de ogni male et conseguire ogni virtù, de la quale, quanto sarà più pieno, potrà tanto più efficacemente tirar gli altri a esse, guiouarà pigliar qualche tempo ogni dì per sè isteso per l. esame de conscientia, oratione, uso delli sacramenti, etc. [...].

3°. Risguardi gli instrumenti che deue essercitare, come sarebbe, oltra l. esempio et oratione desiderosa, vedere se si debono vsar confessioni, o exercitii et spirituali conuersationi, o insegnar la dottrina xiana., o legere, o predicare, etc., et pigliar quelle arme (se non si pono adoperar tutte), che più efficaci si pensa probabilmente sara[nno], et de quali ogni vno meglio si sa aggiutare.

4°. Guardate bon modo di procedere, procurando hauer humilità in cominciare per il basso, non se ingerendo a cose più alte, se non chiamato o vero pregato, se altro non mostrassi la discretione conuenire pro tempore, loco et personis, la quale discretione non può essere compressa per regole alcune. Al modo etiam appartiene procurare la beneuolentia delle persone con quali si trata, con dimostratione, fundata in verità, in virtù et amore, procurando etiam auctorità apresso di loro, et accomodandosi a tutti con prudentia santa, il che insegna precipuamente l. vnctione del santo Spirito, ma l. huomo aggiuta con la consideratione et diligente obseruatione. Et perhò l. esame di conscientia detto si può etiam estendere a quelle considerationi, et in qualche hora del dì bisognaria tenir conto di quelle. Specialmente si obserue che in casi di conscientia et questioni, le quali non si tengono a mente molto chiara et res[ol]utamente le solutioni, non si dia risposta o risolutione temeraria, ma precedendo il competente studio o consideratione.²⁴

This letter provides vital clues to the way a Jesuit should act in new places, in new undertakings, and Ignatius clearly mentions the important role of the examen in the personal life when he says ‘the more perfectly they possess the virtues the more successfully will they be able to draw others.’ Among the practices that are proposed the examen – along with reception of sacraments and prayer – has an important role. When Ignatius’ advices that one should refuse to commit even the slightest sin to further the

²⁴ *Epp.*, XII, Letter 2925A, pp. 251-253.

greatest gain in the world, and not even place himself in danger of committing one,²⁵ it points to the purificatory aspect of the examen.

However, the second part of the letter just quoted points to another aspect of the examen, its relation to prudence and decision making. By asking those in missions to make use of holy prudence in adapting to situations as well as to ‘extend the examination of conscience to include this consideration’ Ignatius is clearly pointing something more than purification of sins. In choosing the group of people to serve as well as for the instruments Ignatius proposes discretion: they should be persons from whom others can expect greater fruit; and with regard to work, they should serve those in greater need, and should prefer the better, the spiritual, the more urgent, etc.²⁶ And he invokes holy prudence, which according to him will be taught by the unction of the Holy Spirit, but we can assist it by reflection and careful observation, and precisely for this he proposes the examination of conscience as an important tool. Thus, we can conclude that in the latter part of the letter Ignatius proposes a spiritual examination of conscience.

2.1.7 Letter 4012, to Gaspari Barzaeo

In this letter written to the missions in India, Ignatius stressed the role of the examen in daily prayer life. As in the cases of other colleges and houses of the Society, the reference to examen pertains to the daily general examen, as part of daily routine.

Las reglas y ordinationes de esse collegio de Goa no las ha uisto aún N.P. Si allá si ynbien las comunes de la Compañía, darán más claridad á V.R.; y como acá uenga el que esas tray ó las ynbié, se escrieuerá lo que pareçe á N.P. Entre tanto solamente diré que es mucho tiempo el que se da á la oración, hablando de los scolares specialmente, á los quales no permiten las constitutiones más de una hora de oración, fuera de su misa, en el día, y en esta hora entran los exámen[es] de conscientia y las horas de nuestra Señora en parte, aunque se puede trocar con meditación ó oración mental, como pareçiere al superior. Y si essa tierra sofre menos las meditationes que esta, habrá menos razón de alongar la oración que acá. Entre las aciones y studios se puede elleuar á Dios la mente; y enderezándolo todo al diuino seruitio, todo es ratió. Y desto duen estar muy persuadidos

²⁵ “Risguarde le pie opere nelle quali si occupa, preferendo quelle, per che specialmente è mandato, a tutte le altre. Pur quanto a quelle altre, preferendo le migliori, come sarebbe le spirituali alle corporali, le più vrgenti a le mancho vrgenti, le vniuersali alle particolari, le perpetue et che durano a quelle che non durano, etc. , quando non si pono fare l. vne et l. altre. Et attendasi che non basta cominciare, ma bisogna, in quanto si può, dar compimento et conseruar le pie et bone opere.” Ibid., p. 251.

²⁶ Ibid.

todos los de la Compañía, á quienes los exercitios de caridad quitan el tiempo de la oración muy á menudo, mas no an de pensar que son ellos agradan menos á Dios que en la oración.²⁷

As we understand from the letter, the main concern is the duration of time spend in prayer, and the focus is not on examen. But what is interesting is the fact that the examen was given a central role even when the prayer time was shortened.

2.1.8 Letter 182, to College of Gandía

Here we consider a letter addressed to the community at Gandía, whose focus is the need for obedience where the examen has a role. With these words Ignatius reminds the community of College of Gandía, as early as 1547, the importance of obedience and the role of the examen in their lives.²⁸ By asking them to examen themselves well, he is reminding them that the practice of examen should serve to find the root cause for lack of peace while obeying the superior. Here Ignatius is making use of the principle that he outlines in the *Exercises* with regard to the general examen on thoughts [*Sp. Ex.* 33]. This stance certainly pertains to an evaluation of one's attitude with regard to obeying the superior rather than following one's will and so it is moralistic in nature.

2.1.9 Letter 295, to Andrés Oviedo

In this letter addressed to Oviedo, an important spiritual figure in the early years of the Society,²⁹ Ignatius talks of the ideals of obedience and the role of indifference, and in that context the examen is proposed as the tool to evaluate the real disposition of the person. Warning Oviedo of the excesses in spiritual life Ignatius reminds him of the duties of the superior, what is required for the scholastics, etc. and so on. Ignatius writes,

quanto á la instantia grande, que V.R. usa en pidir la licentia, he sentido que nuestro Padre la tenía por poco necessaria; porque, sintiendo su paternidad la cosa ser á mayor seruicio

²⁷ *Epp.*, VI, Letter 4012, pp. 90-91.

²⁸ See *Epp.*, I, Letter 182, p. 552-562.

²⁹ The case of Andrés Oviedo is much discussed in the letters as Ignatius was concerned about his tendency for much longer prayers, excessive devotion, problems with prophetic revelations, etc. Letters 182 in vol. I; 260 and 790 in vol. II as well as no 6 in Appendix of XII supplement what we are discussing. See also M. Ruiz Jurado, "Un caso de profetismo reformista en la Compañía de Jesús: Gandía 1547-1549," in *AHSI* 43 (1974) pp. 217-266.

y gloria diuina, sin mucha fuerza viniere en ello: si tal no sintiesse, essa y otra mayor no bastaría. Y en general hablando, le he oydo más vezes, que al inferior deve bastar representar sus motiuos y abrir sus entrañas al superior, sin esforzarse mucho de traerle á lo que él siente ó desea, porque esto en muchos suele ser señal que viue la propria voluntad y juicio; antes, que se haze regla, con la qual se aya de endereçar la del superior, que á ella se tira.

10. Dezía también, que nunca avía leydo que S. Francisco ni otro de los santos Padres vbiessen dado licentia á ninguno de sus religiosos para ir al hiermo antes que hiziessem profesión y fuessen mucho conocidos; pero en V.R. todo lo suelda la promptitud y indiferentia que muestra tener para aceptar lo que la sancta obedientia ordenare, porque esta es una firmíssima ánchora para stableçer y assegurar el ánima.

11. Mas quien quisiesse examinar en sí tal indiferentia, en el caso de V.R., haríalo demandando á su ánima en el acatamiento de Dios N.S.: Primero, si está apareiada para dexar y tomar este recogimiento, quanto al effecto; 2.o. , si piensa contentarse y consolarse en el tomarle y dexarle tal recogimiento. 3.o., si sentirá que sea más conueniente el tomarle ó dexarle, según fuere lo uno ó lo otro ordenado por el superior. Y quien se hallasse assí dispuesto, podría dezir que está indiferente como lo requiere la obedientia verdadera.³⁰

Here it becomes clear that the central concern here is indifference and what the examen can contribute to it. Though the letter does not talk in detail about the examen, we see that the underlying attitude is of examen.

In this detailed letter Ignatius explains the idea of offering one's will, judgement and execution demanding a complete disposition of oneself and suggests examples where such obedience is rendered:

31. Primeramente; siendo así que es de necessidad á todo religioso obedecer al que toma por superior en las cosas que pueden tocar á su regular instituto, y que es de perfección (como dicen los doctores) obedecer en todas cosas (aunque difficiles y contrarias á la propia voluntad, pero tales, que no vea peccado en ellas), mire si se hallará dispuesto sólo para lo suficiente ó para lo perfecto, haziendo regla la voluntad del superior en ciertas cosas ó en todas.

32. 2.o. Disponiéndose á lo más perfecto en general, mire en particular si juzgasse una cosa conueniente para el servicio divino, y deseándola quanto en él es, como tal, pero no como necesaria á la salud ni obligatoria, si se dispondría á dejarla, pareciéndole al superior suyo que la dejase, inclinando su voluntad y juicio á donde su superior se le mostrase inclinado.

33. 3.o. Asímesmo, si le dijese por obediencia que hiciese algo, donde duda si debería obedecer, no pudiéndose certificar que fuese peccado mortal ó venial, pero teniendo duda en ello, si se dispondría á tomar la parte de la obediencia, confiando que Dios, á quien

³⁰ *Epp.*, II, Letter 295, pp. 56-57.

obedece en su ministro, á él dará más lumbre y rectitud para conocer y conformarse con su divina voluntad.

34. 4.o. Siendo así que á las veces el superior hace algún mandamiento con intención de obligar, otras no con tal intención, pero declarando su voluntad abiertamente, ó dando señal de ella en modo que el súbdito la entienda, si se dispondría á obedecer no solamente en el primer modo, que es de necesidad, pero también en el segundo, que es de perfección de obediencia.

35. En estos puntos holgaría nuestro Padre en el Señor que V.R. examinase la obediencia para con el P. Araoz, ó para cualquiera que Dios le diese por superior, así como debrían examinarla los que á V.R. dan obediencia, para con él.³¹

In this instruction on perfecting the obedience, Ignatius makes clear the role of examen in purifying one's will. The examination that Ignatius intends is one of evaluating one's conscience in order to assess one's indifference.³²

Through these words the wisdom of Ignatius is seen in making use of the examen to recognize the real motif that is holding back the person from giving himself up in matters of obedience. The focus of the examen suggested is moralistic as clearly it says to examine particularly if one is ready to give up, if one is acting on attachment or out of one's self-will. So, the examen is a tool to judge one's indifference as well as to find out the readiness to let go of the self-will. Therefore, the underlying principle that appears is of spiritual discernment, because in matters of obedience Ignatius would urge to make superior's will the rule not only when it suits or in some particular cases but in all circumstances.

The call to 'examine whether you find yourself disposed to what is sufficient merely, or what is perfect' clearly points to the spiritual aspect of the examen. Further, with regard to things not obligatory or necessary for salvation, Ignatius proposes that by examining specially one can see the disposition to submit one's will as well as judgement. Here the issue is not of morals but of a higher perfection, a virtue to choose that which is not of obligation but of free choice, of perfection of obedience. Thus, the examination that

³¹ Ibid., pp. 64-65.

³² Evaluating one's willingness to let go of one's own interest and will and to follow the superior's instruction marks the sense of obedience that he envisages for all, as he says in the first part of the letter: "[...] que al inferior deve bastar representar sus motiuos y abrir sus entrañas al superior, sin esforzarse mucho de traerle á lo que él siente ó desea, porque esto en muchos suele ser señal que viue la propria voluntad y juicio; antes, que se haze regla, con la qual se aya de endereçar la del superior, que á ella se tira." Ibid., p. 54.

Ignatius envisages here is one of indifference and not of sin and hence here the discerning principles take centre stage.

2.1.10 Letter 1566, to Andrés Oviedo

Similar to other letters on the duration of prayer, Ignatius reminds Oviedo that as superior he has responsibility over the community to ensure the good spiritual health, first for himself and then of the community.

P.o. Podrá dezir cada día que quiera su missa, confessánose las vezes que quisiere con quien mejor le parescerá.

2. dexando aparte el officio diuino, á que es obligado, en oración ó meditación y exámenes no pasará el termino de vna hora (meno, lo que él quisiere podrá emplear en esto), porque aya más tiempo y aduertencia para otras cosas del seruitio de Dios, cuya presentia en medio de todas las ocupaciones podrá procurar, y hazer oración continua con enderezar todas cosas á su mayor seruitio y gloria.³³

Quanto á la casa.

P.o. El tenga cuidado de los hermanos, como superior dellos, y los confiese, mirando que en los casos que está aduertido no absuela, sin que primero tenga auiso de N.P.; y en todo procure su prouecho spiritual y sanidad corporal con cuidado competente.

2.o. Para esto aduierta que tengan concierto, así en las confesiones, y comuniones, y exámenes, y oración, como también en el comer, y beuer, y dormir, y trabajar; y que obseruen lo que, hablando de su persona, se dixo debía obseruarse, ayudando con penitencias quando fuere menester.³⁴

Ignatius urges him to have shorter time in prayer as this Jesuit was an advocate of longer duration of prayer. Here again the focus is a moralistic examen just as in the examples mentioned earlier.

2.1.11 Letter 3002, to Diego Laínez

This letter addressed to Diego Laínez concerns the correction of the conduct of disobedience and Ignatius asks him to examine himself thoroughly in order to realize the gravity of mistake.

Nuestro Padre está no poco sentido de V.R.; y tanto más, quanto se hacen las faltas de los que son muy amados más graves á quien ama; y quanto más se sienten los defectos, que proceden de quien menos se temian. Y assí me ha mandado escriba de algunos, para que

³³ *Epp.*, III, Letter 1566, p. 309.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

V.R. se conozca, y no vaya adelante en ellos, antes los emmiende, que será fácil en tan buena voluntad como Dios N.S. le ha dado.

Estos errores mire V.R. delante de Dios N.S., y tome por tres días alguna oración para tal efecto, y después escriba, si le parece que sean errores ó faltas: y también escoja la penitencia que le parecerá merecer, y escrita, la envíe. Y antes de recibir de nuestro Padre respuesta, no haga ninguna por esta quienta.³⁵

Through this letter Ignatius asks Laínez to examine his fault of disobedience of acting against the direction of the highest authority. Here by asking Laínez to examine the faults and choose the penance Ignatius is emphasising the moralistic character of the examen.³⁶

2.1.12 Letter 6502, to John Baptist

Ignatius expresses his mind on the way a religious is to obey the superior, to renounce one's own will for that of the superior.

Benchè non ci marauegliamo noi della tentatione uostra circa li studi, per saper che è ordinario del demonio inquietar. Et perturbar li serui d. Iddio, voi dovereste marauegliarui di uoi istesso di hauerli dato luogo, dimenticandoui che il religioso non deue hauer uoluntà alcuna propria, et, per far la uoluntà de Dio, che deue far quella delli superiori. Et tanto manco doueuete accettar la suggestione del demonio in questa parte, quanto nel principio espressamente ui fu dechiarato che non pensaste di studiare, ma de essercitarui nell. ufficii di carità et humilità, per giudicarsi, secondo l. età uostra et attitudine, che perdereste tempo nelli studi, il quale potreste ben collocare nel seruitio de Iddio negli altri ufficii.

Nel corpo tutti li membri non son ochi, nè orecchie, nè mani, nè piedi; et come ogni membro ha l. officio suo et si contenta di quello, così etiam nel corpo della Compagnia tutti non possono essere literati, nè tutti sacerdoti, ma ogni vno se ha de contentare de lo officio che li toca secondo la uoluntà et giuditio del superiore, il quale ha da render conto a Dio N.S. de tutti li soi.

Finalmente, Jo. Baptista, se hauete dato tutto a Dio, lassateui guidare de Iddio, et fate, non al modo vostro, ma al modo de Iddio. Et questo modo lo hauete a conoscere per la obediencia del vostro superiore. Chi altro ui dicessi, si ben si transfigurasse in angelo di luce, non dubitate che sia il demonio, il qual pretende leuarui della Compagnia, la quale no patirà queste proprie voluntadi vostre, se non ui emendati da douero; perchè, si ben tenesti nome di religioso, mancandoui la obediencia non sete religioso. Et per il ben che

³⁵ *Epp.*, IV, Letter 3002, pp. 498, 499.

³⁶ In the English translation of this letter the translators chose to say 'examen your fault' while in Spanish it reads '*miraré cómo me ha ido.*' "Examine these mistakes in the presence of God our Lord, and for three days take some time for prayer to this end. Then write, if you admit that they are mistakes and faults. Choose also the penance you think you deserve; write it out and send it to him. But do no penance in this matter before you receive the answer of our father." The general tone of the letter is one of reprimand and asking for correction of the grave fault committed by Laynez, and so this fits in the theme of moralistic approach of the proposed examen. Cf. William J. Young (trans.), *Letters of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959, p. 271.

vi vogliamo uorriamo che vi reuidesti, et mutasti il modo di procedere che hauete tenuto d. un tempo in qua.³⁷

Ignatius in this strong worded letter urges John Baptist to submit to obedience and asks him to examine the manner of acting.³⁸ This clearly refers to evaluating his conduct and judging for himself where he has gone wrong and where he has failed in living his vow and thus it is moralistic in nature.

2.1.13 Letter 1225,1, to Michael Ochoa

In a letter dated 1550, Ignatius instructs a Jesuit about the importance of a fixed routine, saying “váyase á dormir á hora conçertada (y así aga á los otros que vayan) y esté en la cama entre seis y siete horas por lo menos, para efecto de dormir y reposar. Ultra de su officio y missa (quando la dixere), no pase de una hora de meditación, oración, y examen, contando á la mañana y á la noche; y entre día, en special después de comer, no haga oración ó meditación, donde se detenga.”³⁹ Giving this general timetable for a young charismatic man Ignatius articulates the role of examen in the life of a Jesuit. Though there is no explanation given it is obvious that Ignatius is talking of daily general examen that is outlined in the Exercises and it is moralistic in nature.

2.2 Observations

The letters deal with the examen mostly as part of the daily spiritual routine where the concern is mostly with the time allotted for prayer. We have seen that many letters vouch for the fact that the examen was part of routine of schools or parishes. Ignatius

³⁷ *Epp.*, XI, Letter 6502, p. 438. The last line reads “The Society will not put up with this self-will of yours if you do not really amend. You may have the name of religious, but if you fail in obedience, you are not a religious at all. Now, for the good we desire for you, we want you to examine yourself and get over the way of acting you have had in this matter for some time now” referring to the examen.

³⁸ Here too the English translation talks of examining, whereas the original talk of evaluating: “si ben tenesti nome di religioso, mancandoui la obediencia non sete religioso. Et per il ben che vi vogliamo uorriamo che vi reuidesti, et mutasti il modo di procedere che hauete tenuto.” “If someone tells you anything else, even though he is transformed into an angel of light, be sure that he is the devil who is trying to draw you out of the Society. The Society will not put up with this self-will of yours if you do not really amend. You may have the name of religious, but if you fail in obedience, you are not a religious at all. Now, for the good we desire for you, we want you to examine yourself and get over the way of acting you have had in this matter for some time now. May God our Lord give you His grace.” Young, *Letters*, p. 424.

³⁹ *Epp.*, III, Letter 1225,1, p. 75.

proposed this exercise so that people would draw much spiritual progress, be it to cleanse their conscience of sins or in preparing for sacraments. The practice of the daily examen is presented as part of daily routine in order to reform one's life, to grow in self-knowledge or even to have greater prudence. Thus, we can conclude that most of these examples from the correspondence of Ignatius talk of a moralistic examen. However, when Ignatius deals with prudence, he presents a spiritual examen, as in the case of Jesuits.

3 Peter Faber and the Examen: Story of a Lifetime

Peter Faber and the examen are intimately linked. It is well-known that Ignatius helped Faber overcome his weaknesses by making him practice faithfully the particular examen. The *Memorial* is in fact a study of his inner life as Faber spend a lot of time reflecting on what went on inside him.⁴⁰ And so, Faber's account of the practice of the examen gives much insight into how the examen helps people to grow in holiness and in dealing with their own conscience.

Faber was often troubled in his conscience by various scruples and he describes his situation as: “acuérdate, anima mía, de las espuelas espirituales que tu Señor te había ya echado en tu conciencia por vía de su temor, que eran unos escrúpulos y remordimientos de consciencia, con los cuales el demonio comenzaba a atormentarte,”⁴¹ and, “las tentaciones tenían su origen en feas y malas imaginaciones carnales, sugeridas por el espíritu de fornicación al que no conocía entonces por experiencia espiritual sino por lo que había leído.”⁴² Ignatius helped him to understand his own conscience as the saint himself vouches for it when he says: “lo primero y principal, es que me ayudó a entender mi conciencia, mis tentaciones y escrúpulos que habían durado tanto tiempo, sin entender nada ni encontrar el camino de la paz [...]. En segundo lugar me aconsejó que hiciese confesión

⁴⁰ The *Memoriale* is sometimes called a ‘diary,’ at other times ‘spiritual autobiography’ precisely because Faber reflected, introspected much on his inner life. Some would say that the very purpose of writing the *Memoriale* was a spiritual clarification, a concentration of his attention on his interior life. Cf. Edmund C. Murphy, *The Spiritual Writings of Pierre Favre*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996, pp. vii, 1.

⁴¹ *Fabri*, *Memoriale* n. 6, p. 492. See also Pedro Fabro, *Memorial* (Trans., J.H. Amadeo - Miguel Ángel Fiorito), Bilbao: Mensajero, 2014, n. 6.

⁴² *Fabri*, *Memoriale* n. 9, p. 493.

general con el Dr. Castro y confesarme y comulgar después semanalmente, dándome como ayuda el examen diario de conciencia.”⁴³ We also know that it was not until after two years that Favre made his spiritual exercises, and during this time he was helped by Ignatius to make progress in his life: “aprovechaba en espíritu cada día, conmigo mismo y con relación de los demás. Mi alma era probada por muchos fuegos de tentaciones durante varios años, hasta que salimos de París. Dios me fue dando un gran conocimiento de mí mismo y de mis defectos; mucho profundicé en ellos y me angustié buscando remedio contra la vanagloria. Solamente su gracia me dió muchísima paz en esta materia.”⁴⁴

The practice of examen indeed helped Faber grow in many areas of his life and he gratefully recalls them: “de muchas maneras me enseñó el Señor a poner remedio contra la tristeza que de todo esto me venía. No podré acordarme nunca bastante. Lo que sí puedo decir es que nunca me encontré en angustia, ansiedad, escrúpulo, duda, temor u otro mal espíritu que experimentase fuertemente, sin que, al mismo tiempo, o pocos días después, encontrase el verdadero remedio en nuestro Señor.”⁴⁵ And all through these years he waited to make the exercises, Ignatius made him work hard to root out bad habits in him by getting him to examine his conscience daily.⁴⁶

When Faber says he was given only the daily examination of conscience and not yet other exercises, though he had a great longing for them, indicates the eagerness of Faber to make the Exercises. Ignatius made Faber wait long not because he lacked the necessary capabilities but more due to the scruples in him that made it less profitable if he were to go through it then. So some would say that Ignatius ‘adapted’ the Exercises⁴⁷ by giving the particular examen and frequent communion to help him reach a certain level of peace of soul [*Sp. Ex.* 18].

⁴³ Ibid., n. 9, 10, pp. 493-494. Also Pedro Fabro, *En el Corazón de la Reforma: Recuerdos espirituales de Pedro Fabro, SJ* (Intr. Antonio Albuquerque), Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, n. 9, 10.

⁴⁴ *Fabri*, *Memoriale*, n. 10, p. 494. “I myself made daily spiritual progress as regards others as well as myself, while my soul (for some years and almost up to the time of my departure from Paris) was passing through many fires of temptation and waters of vainglory. Through these our Lord gave me much knowledge of myself and of my faults, allowing me to fathom them.”

⁴⁵ Ibid., 494-495.

⁴⁶ Cf. Pierre Favre, *The Spiritual Writings*, notes 22 on page 66.

⁴⁷ Cf. Fabro, *Memorial*, note 13, p. 99.

In the early part of the memorial Faber mentions how he was troubled greatly in his conscience and here he recalls the great progress made with regard to temptations and other vices that troubled him. There is no doubt about the great fruit that was produced by the daily practice of examen in the saint, and he recalls, with gratitude, the progress he made towards the end of 1541:

nota aquí, anima mía, como nuestro Señor te ha sacado de tantas perturbaciones de espíritu y angustias, de tantas tentaciones que tú tenías sobre tus defectos, sobre las agitaciones del espíritu de fornicación y sobre tus negligencias en hacer fruto. Acuérdate de los conocimientos tan claros que tú has recibido de las causas de tales tentaciones. Acuérdate cómo casi nunca has tenido notable tentación, en la cual no hayas sido consolado no solamente con el claro conocimiento, más también por vía del espíritu contrario a las tristezas, o temores, o desánimos, o aficiones de prosperidad desordenada, dándote nuestro Señor tan claro conocimiento y tan verdaderos sentimientos para remedio del espíritu de fornicación y medios para la pureza y la limpieza de la carne y del espíritu.⁴⁸

So, the examen was part of the prayer life of Faber right from when he learned it from Ignatius until the end of his life in 1546.

He faithfully examined his thoughts, words and all his will as he kept up his other devotions like litany and reciting the Office, as he narrates about his experience on August 2: “este día recordé y tome buena nota de como he de hacer atentamente, todas las noches, la señal de la cruz [...]. Tampoco debo omitir el Padrenuestro, Ave María, y Credo, buscando con perseverancia la inspiración [...]. Esto lo hare después de la letanía acostumbrada y del examen de conciencia.”⁴⁹ And, again on 25 February, 1545, “el miércoles de la dominica *invocavit*, recé mis acostumbradas letanías para que fueran de especial provecho para mí y todos mis hermanos. Porque había nacido en mi un nuevo deseo de pedir gracia para hacer bien todo aquello de lo que yo y os demás hemos de dar especial cuenta. A saber: ordenar bien mis acciones de cada día, hacer bien mi examen de conciencia, rezar las horas canónicas, hacer bien una buena y consoladora confesión.”⁵⁰

⁴⁸ *Fabri*, *Memoriale*, n. 30, pp. 505-506.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, n. 58, pp. 521-522.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 405, pp. 680.

From all that Faber narrates we know the great role played by the examen, especially in his early life. The particular examen he was asked to make helped him to cleanse him of the temptations and other disordered attachments before he made the exercises.⁵¹ When he says that Ignatius helped him to have peace in his conscience Faber refers to the examen as a means to keep tab of all his sins and weaknesses. Faber acknowledges the role of a moralistic examen when he narrates how, through the examen, he kept an account of the sins and omissions. Therefore, in the life of Peter Faber the examen was strongly moralistic, helping him to cleanse his conscience of scruples and then to maintain purity in his whole life.

4 Francisco Javier and the Examen

Francisco Javier was born to Juan de Jasco and María de Azpilcueta on 7 April, 1506 in the castle of Javier, Spain.⁵² After the death of his father, Javier went to the university of Paris in 1525, where he obtained a degree in Arts in 1530. It was here, at Santa Bárbara, that he came in contact with Peter Favre and Ignacio de Loyola. In 1534, along with other companions, Javier pronounced the vows and later travelled to Rome. He was ordained a priest in Venice in 1537 and later, was the secretary to Ignatius for a short period and took part in the Deliberations.⁵³ In March of 1540, Javier left for India, where he would dedicate all his energy to proclaim the Good News. Javier pronounced his solemn vows in 1543, in Goa. This missionary of India and Japan breathed his last in an island, in 1552.

It is a well-known fact that Francisco Javier was first given the Spiritual Exercise by Ignatius during their stay at Paris and that he ardently followed it. Hence, it is logical that Javier had come in contact with the examen, as presented by Ignatius, through the *Spiritual Exercises*. would have done the daily examen, finding time during the studies and in all the ministries. Now our concern here is to highlight what is specific to him in his teachings, writings and other instructions. And for such an endeavour, the *Letters and*

⁵¹ Ibid., n.11, p. 494.

⁵² Cf. Jesús López-Gay, "Javier, Francisco," in *DH CJ*, pp. 2140-2141, here 2140.

⁵³ See *ibid.*

Instructions of Francis Xavier serve as the primary source to indicate best his mind and so we take look at them.

4.1 Living the Christian Faith

Javier's instruction on the usefulness of the examen comes as part of an instruction called 'Manner of praying and saving one's soul'⁵⁴ which is a set of guidelines for Christians to live their faith. We also know that the three documents by Xavier, namely '*Doctrina Christiana*, '*Explanation of the Articles of Faith*' and the '*Order and Rule which should be maintained Each Day in order to Commit oneself to God and to Save One's Soul*' formed what he called the three rules of life,⁵⁵ which were much in use. The *Doctrina Christiana* was a short Portuguese catechism composed by Xavier in 1542 for the use in the missions, and it was used widely, before it was printed in 1557.⁵⁶ Xavier mentions this document for the first time when he instructs Barzaeus in April 1549 to collect the document from the college:

levareis de casa a Doutrina Cristã e a Declaração sobre os artigos da fé, e a Ordem e regimento que um homem há-de ter, todos os dias, para se encomendar a Deus e salvar sua alma. Esta Ordem e regimento dareis aos que confessardes, em penitência de seus pecados, por certo tempo, que depois lhes ficará em costume: é que é muito bom regimento e acham-se muito bem com ele os penitentes. E assim, o praticareis a muitas pessoas, ainda que convosco não se confessem: pô-lo-eis numa tábua, na igreja de Nossa Senhora da Misericórdia, por que daí o tomem os que quiserem aproveitar.⁵⁷

Thus, we see that he used this document widely for pastoral purposes as well as he asked others to use it, thus it is clear that he wanted it primarily for ordinary Christians in their faith life. Like other Jesuits⁵⁸ in new mission territories, Xavier also formulated this basic

⁵⁴ *EpXav.* I, Doc. 66, p. 447.

⁵⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵⁶ Cf. Joseph Costelloe (trans.), *The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1993, p. 41. See also the Spanish version, Francisco Xavier, *Cartas y escritos de san Francisco Javier* (ed. Felix Zubillaga), Madrid: BAC, 1953. All the letters that we deal are in Portuguese and hence we will be citing them from the Portuguese version: Francisco Xavier, *Obras completas*, Braga/São Paulo: Editorial AO/Edições Loyola, 2006.

⁵⁷ Xavier, *Obras completas*, p. 442; Xavier, *Cartas y escritos*, pp. 323-324; *EpXav.* II, Doc. 80, p. 90.

⁵⁸ The Catechism of Peter Canisius is the best example. Cf. Pedro Canisio, *Doctrina Cristiana* (ed. y notas Rafael Zafra Molina), Palma de Mallorca: Olañeta, 2014.

catechism for faith formation,⁵⁹ and based on his experience other rules to help the people.⁶⁰ From this we can conclude that what Javier talks of examination of conscience is a result of his rich pastoral experience.

‘The Order and Rule which a Good Christian should Keep’ instructs Christians how to order one’s day starting with professing one’s faith in triune God. In this detailed instruction for a typical day Javier shows how the examen serves as a means to ask pardon for one’s sins and as well as to be reconciled to God:

guardará o fiel cristão, quando quiser dormir, tudo o que acima está dito, examinando sua consciência dos pecados que naquele dia cometeu; propondo, com a graça do Senhor, emenda deles; tendo propósito de se confessar a seu tempo. E, porquanto o sono é imagem da morte e muitos, que se deitaram a dormir bem dispostos, amanhecem mortos, direi, com grande arrependimento de meus pecados, a Confissão geral e me encomendarei ao santo Anjo da guarda.⁶¹

Javier presents this prayer within the framework of daily prayer meant to commend oneself to God and to save the soul, as the title indicates. He presents the daily examination of conscience against the backdrop of ten commandments and correction of evil habits:

mesmo fará em cada um dos dez Mandamentos por si: para que melhor se lembre; e para propor e procurar de guardar os Mandamentos e se desacostumar de pecar nos Mandamentos que não guarda; e para que, pecando contra algum deles, conheça mais depressa o mal que faz e se arrependa mais cedo dos pecados que por costume comete. E naquele Mandamento em que mais compreendido se achar, pecando por mau costume, pedirá, com grande dor e arrependimento de seus pecados, graça ao Senhor Deus para, naquele dia e em todos os de sua vida, o guardar. E trabalhará muito pela salvação de sua alma, guardando os dez Mandamentos, e porá todas as suas forças em se desacostumar de pecar neles.⁶²

⁵⁹ Costelloe points out that the short catechism which was composed in 1542 has resemblance to the catechism of João de Barros, published in 1539 in Lisbon. It may be possible that Xavier made changes to suit the needs of Goa and other mission area. Cf. Costelloe, *The Letters*, p. 41.

⁶⁰ Costelloe clearly says that Xavier revised and enlarged the rules to suit the various circumstances: “from what he wrote to Barzaeus, it is clear that Xavier had learned from experience the value of these present rules, and many copies had been made of them. Over the years he probably revised and enlarged the original rule which he had written, since the extant copies seem to have been made from four distinct originals.” Costelloe, *The Letters*, p. 201.

⁶¹ Xavier, *Obras completas*, p. 360; Javier, *Cartas y escritos*, p. 264. *EpXav.* I, Doc. 66, p. 451.

⁶² Xavier, *Obras completas*, p. 359; Javier, *Cartas y escritos*, p. 263-264; *EpXav.* I, Doc. 66, p. 450.

So, for Javier the examination of conscience was a means to beg pardon from the Lord for all the sins one has committed on a particular day.

In another place, explaining the way to keep the Commandments, Javier spells out the steps to be followed in examining the conscience in the following way:

Porquanto o sono é imagem da morte, e muitos que se deitaram a dormir bem dispostos amanheceram mortos, examinarei a minha consciência, correndo brevemente os cinco pontos seguintes, que são estes:

1º Dar graças a Deus Nosso Senhor dos benefícios recebidos, em comum e em particular.

2º Pedir graça de conhecer os seus pecados daquele dia.

3º Examinar todos os seus pensamentos, desejos, palavras, obras e omissões, correndo as acções que tem feito, os lugares em que esteve, as pessoas com quem tratou; e advertir as faltas que em tudo isto tem feito.

4º Ter dor e arrependimento dos seus pecados, por ser ofensa da infinita bondade de Deus.

5º Fazer propósito muito firme de nunca mais cair neles.⁶³

The third step clearly explains that the focus of the examen is the faults committed on a particular day and we clearly see that these steps are the same as in the [*Sp. Ex.* 43].

4.2 Instruction for a Novice

Francisco Javier while instructing the novice on how to organize his day spells out the steps to be followed in examining the conscience. It is interesting to note that Javier instructs the novice on how to pray during the ‘novitiate’ and how to meditate on different days of the month in order to gain much benefit:

À noite, antes que vos deiteis a dormir depois de cear, recolhendo-vos em alguma parte, examinareis a vossa consciência das coisas que naquele dia por vós passaram acerca dos pensamentos, falas e obras que no presente dia tendes errado contra nosso Deus e Senhor: examinando a vossa consciência com muita diligência, como se vos houvésseis de confessar das culpas que naquele dia fizestes, e de todas elas pedir a Nosso Senhor Jesus Cristo perdão, prometendo a emenda da vossa vida. No fim, direis um Pai-Nosso e uma Avè-Maria. Depois disto acabado, vos deitareis, ocupando o pensamento como vos haveis de emendar no dia seguinte.

Quando pela manhã acordardes, no tempo em que vos vestirdes e lavardes, trareis à memória as culpas, faltas e pecados em que caístes no dia passado, pedindo a Nosso

⁶³ Xavier, *Obras completas*, p. 368; Javier, *Cartas y escritos*, p. 270; *EpXav.* I, Doc. 66, p. 459. The title reads ‘Ordem que se terá à noite antes de se deitar’ (An Order to be observed before lying down at night) and the steps given here are mostly the same as in the *Sp. Ex.* [43].

Senhor Jesus Cristo graça para não cair, no presente dia, naquelas culpas e pecados em que caístes no dia passado. Depois disto feito, começareis a fazer as meditações da maneira e ordem que tenho dito. Isto fareis todos os dias. Quando o deixardes de fazer, tendo saúde, sem impedimento, fareis exame de consciência e direis vossa culpa por não fazer o que vos é tão mandado e encomendado pelo Padre.⁶⁴

Besides this examen, Javier also recommends other moments of examen for the novice, namely his faithfulness to meditations and the particular examen. Like in the *Sp. Ex.* [24 - 26], while Javier asks him to recall to mind, while he dresses up, the faults, failings, and sins into which he fell on the day before and ask God for the necessary grace not to fall into the same faults and, if he fails in his duties to carry on the meditations and prayer faithfully he should examine the conscience to accept the faults.⁶⁵ Thus, we can see that Francisco Javier emphasises the general examen as well as the particular examen.

4.3 Instructions for Formed Jesuits

Our main concern here is to analyse the daily examen, we would like to also study what Francisco Javier instructed another Jesuit, whom he was appointing as superior, on particular examen. This indicates the mind of Javier on the particular examen, especially how this practice helps one to grow in humility as well as in edifying others.⁶⁶ When Javier tells this Jesuit to “take care not to omit making the particular examination twice, or at least once a day; above all, pay more attention to your own conscience than to those of others; for if one is not good to oneself, how will he be good to others?”⁶⁷ he is reminding the importance of being indifferent and not be controlled by inordinate affections.

He constantly reminds other Jesuits to grow in humility, a humility which is the solid foundation of the Society. While appointing Jesuits to important places he instructs them on how to conduct themselves, how to deal with others and how to take care to be

⁶⁴ Xavier, *Obras completas*, p. 500; Javier, *Cartas y escritos*, pp. 361-362; *EpXav.* II, Doc. 89, p. 164.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.

⁶⁶ *EpXav.* II, Doc. 80, p. 87. “Be very prompt in doing low and humble tasks in order to acquire humility and to grow in it... since the persons who see you occupied with this are greatly edified, and more people come to hear and learn the ‘Christian Doctrine.’” See also ‘instruction for novice.’ Costelloe, *The Letters*, p. 250.

⁶⁷ Costelloe, *The Letters*, p. 250; *EpXav.* II, Doc. 80, p. 88, Javier, *Cartas y escritos*, p. 320. “Primeiramente, lembrai-vos de vós mesmo, tendo conta com Deus, principalmente e, depois, com vossa consciência. Com estas duas coisas, podereis muito aproveitar aos próximos.” Xavier, *Obras completas*, p. 435.

humble in all the activities, i.e. they were to be humble in every way, attributing all good to God and striving for the glory of God.⁶⁸ While insisting on the need for humility he reminded them

que a autoridade com o povo é Deus que a há-de dar; e ele a dá àquelas pessoas que têm virtudes, para que ele confie delas a autoridade e crédito com o povo. Quando os homens querem este crédito por si com o povo, atribuindo a si o que não está neles, Deus deixa de o dar, para que os dons de Deus não venham a desprezo [e] para que sejam conhecidos os perfeitos dos imperfeitos. Pedi sempre a Deus que vos dê a sentir, dentro em vossa alma, os impedimentos que da vossa parte pondeis, por cuja causa se deixa de manifestar por vós no povo, não vos dando o crédito necessário para que nele façais fruto.

Em vossos exames de consciência, não deixeis de examinar-vos particularmente das faltas que fazeis em pregar, confessar e conversar, emendando-vos delas porque, na emenda destas faltas, está acrescentar-vos Deus suas graças e dons.⁶⁹

Hence, for Javier the examen meant a medium of growth in holiness and distinguishing oneself from the rest of the people. Since he sees it as a means for perfection we can say that largely it is moralistic in nature, as the focus is on getting over the imperfections, the faults, and so on.

So, by asking the Jesuits not to forget the particular examen, Javier reminds them that all authority in exercising the ministries comes from God and that they are instruments in His hands and so they must remove all the impediments in them through the practice of examen.⁷⁰ “First, to seek for greater humility in the matter of preaching, attributing everything first and most perfectly to God.”⁷¹ Development of great humility in Jesuits was a deep concern for Javier as in many of his instructions and letters he reminds fellow Jesuits

⁶⁸ “In your dealings with people [...] you will be humble in every way, showing respect for all [...] if some good is done, attribute it to them, telling them that it was they who did it [...]. Strive by yourself to increase the good name of the Society by laying a solid foundation in humility [...] remember that those who endured great labors and were the reason why God increased the good name of the Society were men of solid virtue.” Costelloe, *The Letters*, pp. 419ff.; *EpXav.* II, Doc. 120, pp. 449ff.

⁶⁹ Xavier, *Obras completas*, pp. 704-705; Javier, *Cartas y escritos*, pp. 506-507; *EpXav.* II, Doc. 120, p. 450.

⁷⁰ “I remind you above all that it is God who gives one authority with the people, and that he gives to those who are virtuous so as to entrust them with credit and authority among the people... Always ask God to grant you to feel within your soul the impediments or which you are responsible and are the reason why he ceases to manifest himself to the people through you, not giving you the necessary credit so that you might produce fruit among them.” Costelloe, *The Letters*, p. 420.

⁷¹ Costelloe, *The Letters*, p. 401; *EpXav.* II, Doc. 116, p. 407.

of the need for it. And here we can see the discerning examen being proposed by Javier for removing the impediments and to grow in holiness.

4.4 Observations

From our analysis of the letters of Francisco Javier it is clear that he gave importance to daily examen as well as to the particular examen. It is important to note that the examen is presented in the pastoral context in order to help people grow in Christian faith, as the document title suggests: ‘Order and rule which a good Christian should keep every day in order to commend himself to God and to save his soul.’ In such a scenario, from what we have analysed so far, we saw the examen linked to the keeping of the Commandments of the Lord since the focus of these instructions of Javier was the profession of faith. The primary aim of this document was to teach the faith as well as to help them maintain it in largely a non-Christian world.

We also saw that Francisco Javier recommended the daily practice of examen for novices as way to evaluate one’s day. This practice was to be faithfully followed in order to keep away from sin and to keep an account of faults. For him the practice of general and particular examen went hand in hand, and he recommended them not only to novices but to superiors of the community as well. From all these it is amply clear that Javier dealt with the examen in a moralistic manner.

5 Claude Jay, Alfonso Salmerón and the Examen

5.1 Claude Jay

Claude Jay was born in 1504 in Vulliet, France, and his father was Gerardo and his brother Gervais.⁷² In 1534 he joined Peter Favre in Paris and completed his studies in 1536. Jayo made his Exercises under Favre and later joined the other companions on the way to

⁷² Cf. José García de Castro, “Claudio Jayo: Compañero, teólogo, apóstol,” in *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 80 (2005) pp. 485-542, here 487.

Rome. In 1541 he was sent to Germany where he was involved in propagation of Catholic faith through preaching. Jayo also took part in the Council of Trent and was also involved in the missions in Ingolstadt and Viena.⁷³ He died in Viena, in 1552.

When we look at the life of Claude Jay in relation to the practice of examen we do not find much writings attributed to him, but it would be good to consider how this man was formed religiously in his childhood as well as to trace the roots of his reflective nature. He grew up in a remote Alpine countryside which had strong religious influence and the village was influenced by the monastery of Reposoir.⁷⁴ And, as some authors would say, the association with Pierre Veillard's theological teaching, and later on the method of Peter Lombard, made in Jay a spirit of prayerful reflection.⁷⁵

Claude Jay's first experience of the examen certainly would have been when he made the Spiritual Exercises under Peter Faber during his stay in Paris, in late 1534.⁷⁶ In this forty-days long⁷⁷ Exercises Jay certainly made the daily examen along with the particular examen in the First Week to purify himself. Peter Faber himself who had profited from the particular examen, possibly helped Jay to look at his own faults and correct them by keeping an account of the number of times he committed the particular sin,⁷⁸ and to examine himself about the day in general.

We know that as the companions left Paris after their studies and while walking towards Venice, they regularly made the examen, as each practised it faithfully in his daily life.⁷⁹ Again, once in Venice they 'chose by lot different places to which they would scatter and there spend three months in solitude, prayer, and penance,'⁸⁰ which involved forty days of strict observance before they prepared themselves to preach in different areas. Helping

⁷³ Cándido Dalmases, "Jay, Claude," in *DHCJ* pp. 2142-2143.

⁷⁴ Cf. William V. Bangert, *Claude Jay and Alfonso Salmerón*, Loyola University Press, Chicago, 1985, p. 3.

⁷⁵ Bangert points out that the childhood had a deep impact on Jay specially in spiritual life. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 4.

⁷⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷⁷ Jay's spiritual exercises lasted for forty days and not thirty. Cf. Mary Purcell, *The Quiet Companion*, Loyola University Press, Chicago, 1970, p. 46.

⁷⁸ This is in line with the method Ignatius spells out for removal of a particular fault in *Sp. Ex.* [24-31].

⁷⁹ Simão Rodrigues, *A brief and Exact Account* (trans. Joseph F. Conwell), St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004, p. 33. Also see p. 88 where they mention of 'cleansing the conscience' by confession as a way to reenergize themselves.

⁸⁰ Bangert, *Claude Jay and*, p. 17.

the people prepare for confession was a regular method followed by these companions, and Examination of Conscience was a usual means to this end [*Sp. Ex.* 32]. We also know that during the deliberations to remain together as companions they used examen in their daily prayer.⁸¹

Jay, along with other two Jesuits present at the Council of Trent made the examen every day, as instructed by Ignatius. Along with the theological discussions these were to take up ministries like teaching catechism to children, hearing confession, and giving the exercises to people to help them in their life of faith.

Uno una noche ruega a todos los otros para que le corrijan en todo lo que les pareciere; y el que así fuere corregido no replique, si no le dixeran que dé razón de la causa, por la qual a sido corregido. El segundo haga lo mesmo otra noche y así consequenter, para ayudarse todos en maior caridad y en maoir buen odor de todas partes. A la mañana proponer, y dos uezes examinarnos en el día. Esta orden se comience dentro de cinco días después que fuéremos en Trento. Amen.⁸²

So, while discussing justification, spirituality,⁸³ rubrics of sacraments⁸⁴ and other major theological issues, Jay faithfully would have made the particular examen, making resolution in the morning, as well as the general examen daily.

Form all that we know of Claude Jay' life we see that for him the examen meant an exercise in purifying and perfecting himself. As taught by Ignatius he would have made the five-point general examen and particular examen to get rid of his sins.

5.2 Alfonso Salmerón

Alfonso Salmerón was born in 1515, in Toledo, Spain and his parents were Alonso Salmerón and Marina Díaz.⁸⁵ He had his primary education in Toledo before he moved to the Colegio Trilingüe de Alcalá de Henares where he did Latin, Greek and philosophical studies. Salmerón went to Paris, along with Laínez, in 1532 where they completed studies

⁸¹ Cf. Joseph Conwell, "Deliberaciones 1539," in *DEI*, pp. 549-553.

⁸² *Epp.* I, Letter 123, pp. 386ff.

⁸³ Cf. Bangert, *Claude Jay and*, pp. 78ff.

⁸⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 99.

⁸⁵ See Mario Scaduto, "Salmerón, Alfonso," in *DHCH*, pp. 3474-3476, here 3474.

in Arts. It was here that he met Ignatius and later made his Exercises under him, before they promised to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Salmerón was ordained priest in 1537 and celebrated the first mass in Vicenza, Italy. He made his solemn profession in 1541, before being sent on mission to Ireland.⁸⁶ He was a vivid preacher and renowned theologian who took part in the Council of Trent. Salmerón served in various capacities: the first provincial of Naples, Vicar General (1652), theologian of the Pope at the Trent, and a great administrator. He died in Naples in 1585.

The *Monumenta Salmeronis* does not speak anything with regard to the teaching of Salmerón on Examen. We know that in Paris he made the Exercises and later in Italy, along with his companions he preached, heard confessions and counselled people where he certainly would have used the examen as outlined in the *Exercises*. During his stay in Trent, along with Laínez and Jay, Salmerón would have examined his conscience as instructed by Ignatius, which we have already discussed in the letters. During his mission in Ireland in 1542,⁸⁷ in his brief stay at Bologna he preached and heard confessions just like later in his life, other than this we do not find anything that Salmerón deals directly on the examen.

6 Jerónimo Nadal

Jerónimo Nadal was born in Palma de Mallorca on 11 August, 1507 to Antonio Nadal and Maria Morey.⁸⁸ At the age of 19 he went to Alcalá de Henares, where he studied Latin, Greek and Hebrew,⁸⁹ and then he went over to Paris to complete his Bachelor in Arts in 1533. Then he began his studies in theology and after completion of his doctorate in Avignon he was ordained a priest in 1538.⁹⁰ In the same year he returned to Mallorca and

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ His mission lasted only for 34 days, which ended with their imprisonment for a short while. Cf. *EpSal*. I, p. 581. Also see Bangert, *Claude Jay and*, p. 172.

⁸⁸ Miguel Nicolau affirms that Nadal was born on 11 August, citing Nadal's own testimony (*Nadal*, vol. I, p. 28). See Miguel Nicolau, *Jerónimo Nadal, S. I.: Sus obras y doctrinas espirituales*, Madrid: CSIC, 1949, p. 16; Manuel Ruiz Jurado, *Jerónimo Nadal: El teólogo de la gracia de la vocación*, Madrid: BAC, 2011, p. 3.

⁸⁹ See Ruiz Jurado, *Jerónimo Nadal: teólogo de la gracia*, pp. 4-5. Some authors would also say that Nadal studied Philosophy as well when he was in Alcalá. But there is no certainty in this matter. See Nicolau, *Jerónimo Nadal: sus obras*, p. 16, note. 6.

⁹⁰ Manuel Ruiz Jurado, "Cronología de la vida del P. Jerónimo Nadal, S. J.," in *AHSI* 48 (1979) pp. 248-276, here p. 249.

continued his work there till 1545 when he decided to enter the Society of Jesus. In Rome he made the Exercises under the direction of Jerónimo Doménech who later examined him in order to admit him into the Society on 29 of November. After his vows he was the minister of the house in Rome where he came in close contact with Laínez and Salmerón as they were getting ready to leave for Trent.⁹¹ In 1548 Nadal travelled to Messina along with 9 other companions where they founded the Colegio de Mesina.⁹² In 1552 Nadal returns to Rome where he pronounced the solemn vows, which was received by Ignatius.⁹³

After being incorporated as a full member of the Society we find Nadal assuming important responsibilities like the promulgation of the Constitutions, authorized by Ignatius. He began this important task from Sicilia and then later on he travelled to Spain and Portugal as the *comisario*⁹⁴ as well as promulgating the Constitutions while explaining the grace of the Society – which, according to him, all were called to be part of. Nadal was the one who best explained the ‘Spirit of the Society’ to the first-generation Jesuits who were spread out in different parts of Europe. Nadal played the role of an able administrator, an organizer of disciplined religious life of an infant Society, a pedagogue who laid foundation not only to the first school of the Society but also a system of education and a great spiritual religious who inspired others to live a life of intense prayer.⁹⁵

6.1 The *Epistolae de Nadal* and the Examen

In *MHSI* collection there are four volumes under the title *Epistolae P. Hieronymi Nadal* that deal with all the correspondence and instructions of Nadal. Other than the exhortations (*pláticas*) Nadal deals with the daily examen in very few instances and when he does it is mostly in the form of instructions, rules and regulations for the Society. In these four volumes Nadal talks of the examen as part of the sacrament of confession, in the

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 250-251.

⁹² *Nadal* vol. II, p. 3; Ruiz Jurado, “Cronología,” p. 251.

⁹³ *Nadal* vol. I, p. 129.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 143-145.

⁹⁵ Cf. Miguel Nicolau, “Un autor desconocido en la historia de la meditación: Jerónimo Nadal (1507-1580),” in *Revista española de Teología* 2 (1942) pp. 105ff. See also Manuel Ruiz Jurado, “Nadal, Jerónimo” in *DHJCJ*, pp. 2793-2796.

daily routine one needs to follow as well as when he talks of prayer that is specific to the Society.

As the Visitor, Nadal gave various instructions at different occasions to Jesuits, especially to the superiors and provincials and they deal with practices that were to be undertaken by Jesuits. He advocated two examens daily, one at noon and the other at night: “Sólo ha de auer dos exámenes, vno antes de comer, otro antes de acostar; y el día que vno comulga ó dize missa, no han de hazer el de antes de comer; porque lo tiene hecho para dizir missa ó comulgar.”⁹⁶ A similar instruction was given to the scholastics, emphasising the importance of examen: “Ante vltimam horam antemeridariam, quam eant ad scholas, examinent conscientias suas scholastici, nam post illam lectionem non possunt, cum statim redeuntes debeant mensae assidere.”⁹⁷

Nadal wishes that those of the Society would make the prayer a meeting point between the active and the contemplative, life of Martha and Maria united in the Lord:

i desta manera se ha de guiar la oración, que ella aumente y guie y dé gusto spiritual a las operaciones con su extensión y fuerças en el Señor, y las operaciones augmenten y den virtud y exultacion a la oración; y en esta manera, siendo ansi coniunctas Martha y Maria, y dandose mutua ayuda, no se abraçe solo vna parte de la vida christiana, aunque mejor, que es la contemplacion, mas quitandose la turbación y sollicitud circa plurima, ayude y sea vnida Maria con Martha en el Señor nuestro.⁹⁸

In his exhortations Nadal always insisted that the entire community grow in devotion and perfection of life to which they were called. Gonçalo Vaaz as the provincial recalls these in his communications: “Es necessario para el buen gouierno preuenirse las tentaciones y desgustos, en quanto fuere possible, de los subjectos, para que con mas suauidad se pueda disponer dellos, y ellos caminar en la virtud, a mayor gloria diuina.”⁹⁹ To this effect Nadal had given them various practical instructions where he insisted on the daily observance of spiritual practices:

1. Hazer todas cosas á maior gloria de Dios.

⁹⁶ *Nadal* vol. IV, p. 201.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 347.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 674.

⁹⁹ *Nadal* vol. IV, p. 205.

2. Amar el instituto.
3. Amar el fin.
4. Amar y desear trabajar para el fin.
5. Obediencia perfecta.
6. Oração práctica y extendida á la obra.
7. Humilidad.
8. Simplicidad.
9. Amor de mortificación.
10. Amor de padeçer.
11. Modestia en el hablar y edificación.
12. Amar ser despreçiado.
13. Diligencia en las obseruaciones quotidianas.
14. Caminar delante de Dios y en su presençia siempre.
15. Conseruar siempre el prinçipio de la graçia de Dios actuado.
16. Y exercitarse en los actos de las virtudes theólogas y principalmente de la charidad.
17. Alcançar por costumbre de tener siempre el amor de Dios actuado, en modo que mueua sempre y todas las operaçiones, sea de todas las uirtudes la forma y ser superior de la charidad.¹⁰⁰

He also prescribed the Exercises to those who wish to profit spiritually, not only when they were planning to enter the Society but anyone who want to make spiritual progress.

Decimumtertium: ad superiora illud est addendum: posse nos, vbi ahquis occurrerit, quem iudicemus ad Societatem aptum, et hic puer non esset, [ei dicere quod, ad] eligendum de statu vitae suae, esset illi utile [ad hoc se disponere] per communicationem exercitiorum spiritualium. Esset item utile aliis, quos ad hunc scopum uolumus iuuare, consuleremus suo loco commode ut instituerent facere confessionem generalem omnium totius uitae peccatorum semel; et non videretur ahenum si illis traderemus exercitia primae hebdomadae, et pauclus meditationes iuxta ea, quae notantur in vltimis capitibus primarum annotationum exercitiorum nostrorum.¹⁰¹

Nadal made it mandatory for all entering the Society to make the Exercises, as prescribed by the *Constitution*: “dar los ejercicios espirituales a los que se reciben a la Compañía, es neçessario por la constituçion, y no parece aurá causa por que le comuten en otras experiencias, como las otras se pueden comutar.”¹⁰² Thus we see Nadal advocating the examination of conscience for making a better confession, usually a general confession of the entire life, as done usually in the First Week of the Exercises.

¹⁰⁰ These are compiled as points that Nadal had given to those in Europe, as G. Vaaz indicates in his communications. These could be extracted from the exhortations of Coimbra given by Nadal in 1561. *Ibid.*, pp. 208-209.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 200.

Thus, in the instructions Nadal treats the examen just like in the *Spiritual Exercises*, either as a practice in the First Week or as a twice-a-day practice of perfection.

6.2 *Pláticas espirituales de Nadal and the Examen*

Jerónimo Nadal, in his capacity as the visitor to different provinces, addressed the Jesuits talking to them on varied topics like grace special to the Society, the way to pray, the characteristic ways to live the vows, etc. In these exhortations Nadal was imparting what Ignatius would consider as central to the Society. In many ways Nadal was interpreting Ignatius by his virtue of being close to the founder as well as the one who captured the founder's vision. In the words of Juan Polanco, the secretary of the Society, Nadal had a deep knowledge of the mind of Ignatius:

tiene mucho conocimiento de N. P. M.o Ignatio, porque le ha tratado mucho, y parece tiene entendido su spiritu, y penetrado, quanto otro que yo sepa en la Compañía, el instituto della; y con esto en humildad y obediencia perfecta, no solamente de ejecución, pero de voluntad y entendimiento, es de los que más constantemente se han mostrado ser verdaderos hijos de la Compañía. Sin esto, es hombre de grande animo en el seruicio diuino, y para cosas grandes y uniuersales y todas finalmente muy strenuo: y esto he querido scriuir, porque V. R. esté al cabo de lo que se siente de su persona, et nolite secundum faciem iudicare, sed rectum iudicium iudicate.¹⁰³

Nadal based himself on the *Spiritual Exercises* and the *Constitutions* while he addressed the Jesuits in various parts of Europe.

What Nadal talked of the examen, is within the context of prayer proper to the Society, for he always insisted that one should pray according to the manner specially given to the Society: “Entendemos ahora en particular como haremos oración al modo de la Compañía; pues nos ha dado Dios N. Señor especial modo de orar en los Ejercicios, aprobado por la Sede Apostólica.”¹⁰⁴ He clearly discouraged other ways of praying when he said,

todos los que en la Compañía entran, que ternan particular deuoción y *modo de oración diuerso*, este han de dexar y mudar en el *modo* de la Compañía y particular deuoción della con intenso desseo de tenerle y ser posseydos dél; y exercitarse en las obras de la

¹⁰³ Nadal vol. I, p. 766.

¹⁰⁴ Nicolau, *Jerónimo Nadal: sus obras*, p. 522.

Compañía; leer, meditar, y gustar lo que ha scripto el P. Mtro. Ignacio con toda ponderación, deuoción y humildad. Esto ha de dar á sentir nueuo spiritu y deuoción propria de la Compañía [...].

Y es cosa subiecta á experiencia, que quien sigue su espíritu, aunque bueno, en la Compañía, y no se humilia al proprio della, poco á poco va á total manera diuersa, radicando sus hábitos; y estos son después difíciles, quanto más van, de tornar al camino, y puede ser que de allí se sigan dissensiones importantes en cosas spirituales, y perder poco a poco el spiritu de la Compañía. Muy specialmente se ha de tener deuoción en los ejercicios y en guiarse por ellos; porque por aquel principio ha venido el P. Mtro. Ignacio a tan alta contemplación y oración, y á hazer Dios por él tan grandes effectos.¹⁰⁵

Nadal places the examen in the *via purgativa*, as a means to purify oneself in the way to perfection. For Nadal penance and purification were ways of preparing the mind in order to ascend to the heights of perfection¹⁰⁶ and he never missed to mention this aspect in his exhortations.

Hase de tener aduertencia principal y diligencia, en todo lo dicho, para que seamos capaces de la *perfetiön y dones de la oración*, que apuremos nuestros coraçones y consciencias primero de todas culpas graues, y tambien muy de ueras nos guardemos intensamente de todas las ueniales, y de qualquier imperfetiön, y nos esforcemos en el Señor de extirpar todos los malos hábitos y inclinaciones que nos han quedado de los peccados passados, y caminar de bien en mejor en todas uirtudes y obseruaciones particulares de nuestro modo de viuir, y siempre hagamos algun seruicio á Dios nuestro Señor y á sus santos y ángeles *para* este don de oración; y en ella misma lo demandemos.¹⁰⁷

In his *Orationis* Nadal underlines the importance of undertaking frequent penances in order to have a clear conscience. He advocated the use of sacramental confession as well in this process.

En los principios de la conversiön – dice – hay que procurar con diligencia las obras y frutos de la penitencia, y mientras no se hinque y fije la espina y urja la conciencia, y dolor de lo pecado, aun quando nos hayamos confesado debiamente, no hay que derramarse en otras meditaciones y contemplaciones, omitiendo las que pueden favorecer aquel fruto. Y así conviene una disposiciön de ánimo como si quisieras pasar toda la vida en ejercicios de penitencia, como si te persuadieras que Dios te ha perdonado tus pecados con tal que hagas penitencia condigna, y que no te será del todo propicio hasta que la termines; mas quando por la divina benignidad se te hubiere significado que Dios te es propicio, o bien lo conocieres por el consejo de tu confesor o director espiritual, entonces pasa a otros ejercicios, pero de tal suerte que continúe el verdadero sentimiento de la penitencia y mortificaciön. Si, con todo, hubiere remisiön en este sentimiento, y no puedes

¹⁰⁵ Nadal vol. IV, pp. 680-681.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Nicolau, *Jerónimo Nadal: sus obras*, p. 152.

¹⁰⁷ Nadal IV, p. 680.

resarcirlo por medio de los ejercicios acostumbrados y uso del sacramento de la penitencia, comienza de nuevo con seriedad a darte a la penitencia hasta que el espíritu se satisfaga.¹⁰⁸

For Nadal the *via purgativa* was related to getting rid of sins and imperfections as we see in his exhortation of Alcalá in 1561. While underlining the merit of the *Exercises* as the basis of prayer in the Society, he says,

así ha de ser en lo que toca a la oración, si algún modo particular tenáis de ella. Y por eso en la Compañía, luego en entrado uno se le dan los Ejercicios para componerle en nuestro modo de proceder en la oración. En los Ejercicios se os muestra el camino de la oración; caminad por ellos, por la meditación de los pecados, por los misterios de la vida de Cristo y pasión, etc., por donde más aprovechamiento halléis.¹⁰⁹

He made it clear that the examen is part of active life by saying, “viniendo más a lo particular, la oración que nosotros tratamos es en dos maneras: la una es de los exámenes, que son tan ordinarios en la Compañía, que pertenecen a la vida activa y a la vía que llaman purgativa, donde se trata de conocer y desarraigar vicios y mortificar ruines inclinaciones; la otra es para más adelante, para ganar virtudes.”¹¹⁰ Therefore, for Nadal, the exercises are the basis of prayer and as we have already said, the first week forms a core part of the purgative way.

Further we can say, for Nadal the first Week of the Exercises – experiencing shame for one’s sins – was the door to enter the path of perfection. For Nadal, the practice of confession, daily examen, penance and mortification are purgative practices. In this exhortation in Spain he terms purification as the first step in prayer: “Pero purificada el alma en la primera semana, se ilustra y se hace apta para la contemplación, en la cual después cada uno se ejercitará en la Compañía.”¹¹¹ Thus it is clear that Nadal followed the dynamic of the *Spiritual Exercises* and proposed the examen and general confession in order to purify oneself.

¹⁰⁸ Jerónimo Nadal, *Orationis observationes* (ed. Miguel Nicolau), Roma: IHSI, 1964, p. 150-151. (We have taken the translation from Nicolau, *Jerónimo Nadal: sus obras*, p. 153).

¹⁰⁹ Jerónimo Nadal, *Las pláticas del P. Jerónimo Nadal: la globalización ignaciana*, (edición y traducción Miguel Lop Sebastián), Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 2011, p. 291.

¹¹⁰ Nadal, *Las pláticas*, p. 291.

¹¹¹ Nadal, *Las pláticas*, p. 85.

Nam primo purgatur animus per confessionem generalem, etc. atque ita, ut etiam venialia sollicitè extirpentur vincanturque seu debentur inclinatus (quae est prima exercitorum pars). Adde quod sacramenta adiungit et usum frequentum examinum, idque diligentissime. Neque enim, etsi communia haec videantur examina, contemnenda sunt; sed sunt plurimi facienda. Purgatur autem mens per examina, ne possit oratio impediri. Est autem notandum quod habet examen mirabilem ordinem, ut patet. Non est autem silentio praeterendum quod coniungitur ibi sacramenti virtus, dum quis proponit confiteri et satisfacere. In hoc fuerunt sancti vigilantissimi, scilicet in extirpatione omnium defectuum et imperfectionum, et in cavendo a qualibet etiam occasione.¹¹²

Further in the *pláticas* we can see Nadal insisting on the ascetic value of the examen:

después de hechos los ejercicios, se guía y conserua y augmenta la oración con la perseuerancia en ella y en los ministerios de su uocación; y specialmente la via purgatiua quotidianamente se exercita por el quotidiano examen de su consciencia y exercicio de abnegación y mortificación, y desseo de oprobrios y padecer por Xpo., y por platica de la obediencia, no solo de la execution y voluntad, mas aun del entendimiento, y también con el exercicio de la confession sacramental y ordinarios ejercicios conformes a los de la primera semana, como de la muerte, del juyzio final, de los secretos juyzios y permissiones de Dios, de la miseria de los peccados, de la vanidad del mundo y semejantes.¹¹³

Here it will be interesting to note what Nadal says on the particular examen, as a similar “vitorum mortificationem ne negliges, fili, per sensum gratiae vocationis tuae vel consolationis in ministeriis, tibi omni fiant acerba, ubi magis te arbitraberis es securum. Sed hanc mortificationem iuvat quotidianum examen particulare, cum suis additionibus.”¹¹⁴

He dealt also of the value of the examen in formation of novices in the Society or be it for anybody who wants to grow in perfection.

Aora, pues ¿qué medios tiene la Compañía para ayudar a sus novicios y qué discurso es el de nuestras probaciones? – Esta es la summa de los ejercicios en que se emplean: en la penitencia e en la meditación y oración, en las dos vidas activa y contemplativa, en

¹¹² Nadal vol. V, pp. 90-91. “Pues, primero se purifica el alma por la confesión general, etc., y de tal manera que incluso se extirpan solícitamente los pecados veniales, son vencidas o debilitadas las inclinaciones (que es la primera parte de los ejercicios). Añade que a los sacramentos, une el uso de frecuentes exámenes, y ello con suma diligencia. Pues, aun cuando estos exámenes parezcan de poca monta, no deben ser menospreciados; sino tenerlos en mucho. Pues por los exámenes se purifica la mente, para que la oración no sea impedida. Y es de notar que el examen tiene un orden admirable, como es patente. Y no debe ser pasado en silencio que ahí se añade la fuerza del sacramento, cuando uno propone confesarse y satisface.” Nadal, *Las pláticas*, pp. 83-84.

¹¹³ Nadal vol. IV, p. 675.

¹¹⁴ Nadal, *Orationis*, p. 151. See also Nadal vol. IV, p. 700.

vencer vicios y extirpar malos hábitos, y ayudarse contra las malas inclinaciones y en ganar virtudes.

Y ¿qué vías ay para esto? Las ordinarias que ay en la Iglesia, divinas, de gran eficacia, confesión y comunión. La penitencia quita la culpa, debilita el ruin habito, ayuda para no recaer adelante. Y, porque cómodamente no se podía hazer la confesión cada día, escógense los domingos para esto, por ser este día dedicado al culto divino. Y cada día se usa el examen, donde se procuran los actos de contrición, y dos vezes al día; y esto es aprovecharse del sacramento de la penitencia in voto y disponerse a recibirlo con más aumento de gracia. Y assí va el alma fortificando contra los pecados y crece en nosotros el aborrecimiento dellos; y con el ayuda del sacramento de la penitencia, tan ordinario, ayúdase mucho el alma en este exercicio contra los pecados y para crecer más en las virtudes. Vamos al sacramento de la comunión de ocho a ocho días, donde el alma es confortada y se rehaze y toma sustento y nutrición.

Más, venidos los seis meses se me torna a proponer el examen donde otra vez me torno a renovar y a excitar de nuevo e la perfección, y hago una confesión general de aquellos seis meses de lo confessado, porque es cosa de perfección y ayuda mucho. Y presupone la Compañía que me he aprovechado, y que tendré más conocimiento de los pecados y más contrición, y que tomándolos todos juntos mueven más a dolor y contrición de los pecados.¹¹⁵

In another occasion Nadal exhorts all to be faithful to the five-points examen in order to grow in holiness and perfection in life. “Examen generale per 5 puncta diligenter exerceamus, bis scilicet quotidie; examinemus vero si quid peccamus in quotidianis nostris operationibus in quibus ex instituto versamur, si quid in his quae ex consuetudine praeteriti temporis nos oppugnant peccatorum reliquiae, si quid externi alicuius peccati vel defectus incurrit in animam nostram.”¹¹⁶ And for Nadal the first point was gratitude, as he mentions elsewhere: Notandum quod, quia Deo summopere displicet superbia et ingratitude, qua quis eius tam multa beneficia non agnoscit, ideo in examine primo aguntur gratiae. Obsecratio est *quum* postulamus per misericordiam Dei, per *Christi passionem et mysteri omnia, per merita et intercessionem Sanctorum in Christo*.¹¹⁷

Finally, according to Nadal the examen was also a continuous prayer in one’s life, other than an exercise in purification. “[...] el continuo examen y la diaria meditación, además de la lectura en la mesa, el sacrificio de la misa, las predicaciones, los coloquios

¹¹⁵ Nadal vol. V, p. 389.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 515.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 93.

espirituales, y otras cosas semejantes, las cuales todas ciertamente deben ser consideradas como una continua y permanente oración.”¹¹⁸

6.3 Observations

Jerónimo Nadal deals with the daily examen in his exhortations and his instructions to various communities. As the official visitor and while promulgating the Constitutions he always chose to point out the specificity of prayer in the Society, one that is solely based on the style of the founder Ignatius. In describing the *Spiritual Exercises* as the source of this way of proceeding in prayer, Nadal presented the First Week of the exercises as the purgative way. Penance, mortifications and confessions form an integral part of the purificatory stage of one’s life in this way to perfection. In such an active life of purgation the examen always has an important role and Nadal presents it a good way to get rid of vices and bad inclinations. In most occasions he talks of the examen as a daily practice in perfection, in order to cleanse the soul of vices and sins; and yet we also find allusion to the examen as a spiritual practice when he termed the examen as a way to be in continual prayer. Since Nadal presents the examen as a means to purify oneself of the sins and vices, as an exercise along with confession we conclude that it is moralistic in nature.

7 Juan Alfonso de Polanco

Juan Alfonso de Polanco was born in Burgos in 1517, as the second of nine siblings and his parents were Gregorio and María de Salinas.¹¹⁹ At the age of thirteen Polanco was at Paris studying Humanities and Philosophy and obtained Master degree there. He was in Rome as *scriptor apostolicus* when he came in contact with the Jesuits, and where he made the Spiritual Exercises under Laínez and entered the Society in 1541. After his theological studies at Padua he worked some time in Milan, Bologna and other cities of Toscana when Ignatius called him to Rome to be the secretary of the Society, an office that he carried on

¹¹⁸ Nadal, *Las pláticas*, p. 88.

¹¹⁹ Cf. José García de Castro (ed.), *Los directorios de J. A. de Polanco, S.J.*, Madrid/Santander/Bilbao: UPCo/Sal Terrae/Mensajero, 2016, pp. 21-22. See also Cándido de Dalmasés, “Polanco, Juan Alfonso de,” in *DHCV*, vol. IV, pp. 3168-3169, here p. 3168.

for 26 years, under the first three Generals. He was the man behind Ignatius in helping Ignatius to draft the Constitutions as well as to communicate through letters with the rest of the Society spread all over the world. Polanco held many offices in the Society in crucial times: Vicar General of the Society of Jesus at the death of Ignatius and later at the death of the second general Laínez and a third time at the death of Borja, was the Assistant to Spanish province, admonitor of the General and later the provincial of Sicily. He is considered the first historian of the Jesuits for the meticulous description in the *Chronicon* of the events surrounding the newly founded order,¹²⁰ and he was a prolific writer on themes such as spiritual, legal and historical matters.¹²¹ He died in Rome on 21 December, 1577.¹²²

7.1 The *Chronicon* and the Examen

Polanco in the *Chronicon* talks of the examen mainly as the existing practice in different parts of the world and not so much as a treatise on this practice. Though most of what Polanco talks of the examen is a mere reference to the practice of the examen, the *Chronicon* provides us with valuable insights into how diffused this practice was. We would like to place all of what Polanco writes on the examen into two categories, one as pastoral and the other as religious life.

¹²⁰ “Merece ser considerado como el primer historiador de la CJ. En 1548, compuso un *Sumario* del origen de la Orden, en castellano, que llega hasta 1541. A éste siguió otro en italiano, hasta 1551. Entre 1573 y 1574, escribió el *Chronicon* latino, en el que, en forma de anales, relata la historia de la CJ desde sus orígenes hasta la muerte de Ignacio. En su intención, este *Chronicon* debía contener una cantidad de materiales, sobre los que pudiese escribirse la historia de las casas y de las personas de la CJ. Como primera parte de esta historia, redactó un esbozo latino de la Vida de Ignacio. A modo de diario, desde 1564 hasta 1573, escribió unos *Commentariola*, que contienen datos precisos y minuciosos sobre este período. Hay que añadir, finalmente, su actividad como escritor de obras apostólicas y espirituales, como avisos para la vida cristiana, oración, ayuda a los moribundos, a más de su contribución a los Ejercicios ignacianos.” Dalmases, “Polanco, Juan Alfonso de,” p. 3168.

¹²¹ His contribution in writing the *Constitutions* as well as in the history is well known; but what is lesser known is his contributions in spiritual matters like *El directorio de confesores* (1554), *El directorio de Ejercicios espirituales* (1574), and *El directorio de ayudar a bien morir* (1575). Cf. García de Castro, *Los directorios*, pp. 31ff.

¹²² *Sommervogel*, vol. VI, p. 939.

7.1.1 Pastoral

The members of the newly founded order were learned men who taught the Catholic faith to the people on the street corners, in the churches and universities through sermons and preaching, and the examination of conscience and the sacrament of confession occupied a privileged place. The *Chronicon* narrates the pastoral effectiveness of the practice of the examen in various parts of the Jesuit world. This spiritual exercise was an effective tool in leading people to conversion and change of heart. We club together here all the instances of the examen of pastoral nature – when the examen was employed as a tool in the preparation for general confession or as part of the routine of schools or universities.

The practice of examining the conscience was made part of the educational ambit of the Jesuits starting with the Roman College and later on in Messina, in Perugia, Modena, Córdoba, and Lisbon. Polanco notes that the students in Sicily, at the Colegio de Mesina started confessing every month,¹²³ while many confessed at San Nicolas parish and made the examen part of their life:

también en nuestra iglesia de San Nicolás, los viernes, comenzó a ser explicada la doctrina cristiana; todos los lectores en los mismos días, en sus clases enseñaban la misma a sus discípulos, y en la misma iglesia se tenían sermones con numeroso auditorio, cuyo comienzo lo tuvo el P. Andrés Frusio. Comenzó también a introducirse la costumbre de confesar con frecuencia y de predicar, la cual creciendo poco a poco con razón aumentó el fruto espiritual y la edificación de la ciudad. Como quiera que los estudiantes comenzasen todos los días a asistir al sacrificio de la Misa y en los domingos al sermón, y confesar todos los meses según el juicio del confesor, y a examinar las conciencias diariamente, referir los estudios para la gloria de Dios, consagrar un tiempo a la oración, absteniéndose de juramentos y de palabras poco honestas; y así en sus costumbres aprovechasen por todos los modos, con razón el consuelo aumentaba a sus padres.¹²⁴

This was the beginning of a long tradition where examination of conscience and communion after due confession would form an integral part of Jesuit education system.

¹²³ *Chron.* vol. I, p. 284.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 284-285.

Through the *Chronicon* we also know that Jesuits like Ribadeneira, Botello and many others were involved in preaching and as a result much conversion was possible:

y no era menor el fruto de la confesión y de la comunión; pues al principio del año y en los meses siguientes muchos se acercaron a la confesión, los cuales se habían abstenido de ella algunos años, y por su ejemplo se movieron aquellos que no tenían ningún deseo de confesar; y excitados por la fama célebre del Colegio muchos habían limpiado sus conciencias, manchadas por mucho tiempo de grandes pecados, que no lo habían hecho por seis y veinte años, por el Sacramento de la penitencia las aliviaron.¹²⁵

Besides these, we have also the example from India where there was much fruit born of preaching of retreat mainly to the Portuguese while simple ways of praying and the examen was given to people of ordinary faith, following the teaching of the *Exercises*.¹²⁶

In various other places the examen and confession were help in deepening the devotion of people and the following examples describe how this practice helped many:

aunque esta casa de Lisboa se juzgaba entonces con el nombre de Colegio, sin embargo la casa de los profesores no ejercía los oficios de un Colegio, cuando se entregaban a desempeñar los ministerios de la Compañía y los nuestros no se entregaban a los estudios. Muchos diariamente se fortalecían con los sacramentos de la Penitencia y de la Eucaristía en nuestra iglesia consagrada a San Antonio; y si los operarios fueran muchos más, se creía que la mayor parte de aquella ciudad acudiría a ellos. Fueron propuestos los ejercicios espirituales a muchos casados, que en examinar las conciencias, en la oración mental y en la frecuencia de recibir los sacramentos y en otros actos de piedad, con gran pureza sirven a Dios.¹²⁷

This example from Lisbon highlights the importance of the practice of the examen, not only in the life of students but among the people who frequented the Jesuit chapels.

¹²⁵ *Chron.* vol. II, pp. 244-245.

¹²⁶ “En Goa en la predicación se ejercitaba el P. Antonio Gómez con gran fruto; y había admitido a veinte y seis portugueses, a los cuales los ejercitaba en virtudes y en letras. Pero casi otros tantos de los jóvenes indios, que se instruían en el Colegio de San Pablo, los echó del Colegio, y después a todos de esta clase, echándolos uno tras otro [...]. Y ciertamente algunos de los portugueses también se marchaban, cuando quería exigir el alimento, la bebida, el sueño, la lectura y la oración en los nuestros según la norma del Colegio de Coímbra; pero en los indios, [...] comenzó a atarlos con varios mandatos e instrucciones y a señalarles horas de contemplación, de oración y de examen.” *Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-136.

The *Chronicon* also reveals not only the practice of the examen but sheds light on the prayer patterns of the students which allows us to situate the role of the examen in its proper context.

El P. Gaspar quiso que se tuviera este modo y orden, que levantándose una cuarta hora después de medianoche, para que meditasen los nuestros una hora íntegra de meditación hasta la quinta; se seguía la misa, a la cual asistían todos los estudiantes; a la séptima hora reuniéndose en la clase, dedicaban tres horas en ella; seguía el examen antes de la comida, y este terminado, media hora hablaban de asuntos divinos en lugar de recreo; en la primera hora después del medio día dedicaban de nuevo tres horas a los estudios; otra hora finalmente íntegra, desde la octava hasta la novena la entregaban a la oración mental, después de que dedicasen otra hora para la repetición de las lecciones [...]. Así pues, como dedicasen tantas horas al estudio, más de tres horas cada uno dedicaba a la oración mental, además de la misa y las exhortaciones y los coloquios espirituales; y se ha de creer lo que juzgaba un varón espiritual el P. Gaspar que así era conveniente en aquel tiempo para aquellos estudiantes.¹²⁸

A estos los animaba el P. Everardo según su talento y según vocación a entregarse al honor de Dios, y si pudieran a la utilidad de los prójimos. Les enseñaba el modo de examinar la conciencia, y que continuasen cada ocho días en confesar y comulgar, como ellos lo hacían; y si no encontrasen aquel fervor, que les predicaba su guía, para que se entregasen a la misericordia y a las obras de caridad, de este modo fácilmente compensarían el fervor.¹²⁹

These examples from different places like Lisbon and Perugia indicate the spread of the examen early on.

Polanco also gives account of the practice of examen and confession that acted as a means to bring peace to troubled souls:

y lo que dijimos que había sucedido en otros Colegios, que aquellos que en otros sitios hubieran confesado sus pecados, como no pudieran tener el espíritu tranquilo, hicieran de nuevo las confesiones con los nuestros; y con la ayuda de un examen hecho, muchos y muy graves pecados, expuestos, que antes no habían confesado, volvieron a su casa con la conciencia pacificada.¹³⁰

Sería muy largo referir cada uno de los signos del provecho en virtudes y piedad de estos estudiantes; solamente esto diré, que pertenece a la perfección, porque como cierto estudiante dañase a otro, y su padre quisiera vengar la injuria, “te ruego, padre, que no lo hagas, dijo, pues es contra lo que se me enseña, a saber de perdonar las injurias.” Muchos confesaban y comulgaban cada domingo; y usaban por la mañana de la oración y por la tarde del examen de conciencia; para que no faltasen quizás al sacrificio de la Misa, que

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 734-735.

¹²⁹ *Chron.* vol. III, p. 49.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

para ellos se decía por la mañana, algunas veces ellos venían al Colegio antes de la luz; y era de admirar, cuando caminaban por los pueblos, su modestia, y de gran edificación, cuando antes fuesen niños tan inquietos y turbulentos, como en el proverbio se decía; “hijo de Lisboa.” [...] decía que ya esperaba que el nombre “hijos de Lisboa” plenamente se debía extinguir, a saber por la modestia, que en los jóvenes comenzaba a percibirse además de la moralidad; de este modo muchos ciudadanos se alegraban que finalmente habían encontrado a sus hijos perdidos.¹³¹

This example from Lisbon highlights the role played by the practice of examining one’s conscience just as that of confession in bringing about conversion and cultivation of morality, not only in the students but in the entire population associated with such institutions.

In another instance, the *Chronicon* narrates how the practice of the examen was employed in courts and royal palaces when it says,

a la Reina también le proponía ciertos ejercicios espirituales; cuando se iba a marchar dejó en su lugar al P. Mirón, Provincial, para continuarlos; pero ella, que quería con seriedad dedicarse a la oración, le pidió al P. Mirón que le tratase con ella igual como si la tomase a ella desde el principio para instruirla; le enseñó con diligencia el examen diario, que por la mañana y por la tarde hacía, y acomodado el primero de los tres modos de orar los mandamientos del Señor, y para lo restante, que se contiene en la doctrina cristiana, y dedicaba una hora por la mañana todos los días a esta oración, y se encontraba muy bien, y se ejercitó durante mucho tiempo de esta manera; y se alegraba en gran manera cuando el P. Mirón la visitaba, lo que hacía tres veces a la semana, y ella le daba cuenta de todo; cada quince días confesaba y todos los meses comulgaba; lo relacionado con la discreción de espíritu de la primera semana y lo que para excitar con exactitud el amor de Dios, como ella misma deseaba, le fueron propuesto a la misma, y de este modo para todo el año le parecía a ella suficiente para meditar todo ello.¹³²

In a similar vein, the *Chronicon* gives the examples of the spread of regular confession, which was always preceded by an earnest examination of one’s conscience.

Fue copiosa la cosecha de penitentes de otras naciones, y principalmente de españoles de la corte de la Reina, a todos los cuales se les satisfizo, ayudando Dios, como también a italianos y franceses. Entre ellos había muchos, que como hubieran vivido en sitios donde no hablaban su idioma nativo, durante muchos años, habían carecido del remedio y del consuelo de la confesión. Cuánto aprovechasen en tales confesiones las personas de una manera especial alemanas, bastante lo indicaba su satisfacción y juntamente consolación, como viese que ellos se examinaban, fuera de la costumbre llevada por los luteranos; pues muy extensamente por toda Alemania este abuso en el modo de confesar (se había extendido). De tal manera que los nuestros apenas supiesen donde en otro sitio que entre

¹³¹ *Chron.* vol. IV, pp. 522-523.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 545-546.

ellos se hiciera una confesión sincera e íntegra; [...]. La mayor parte de ellos obedecían a los consejos de los nuestros, y mientras sufrían que fueran examinados íntegramente, recibían una singular consolación de su espíritu, cuando ellos se dieron cuenta que ellos se habían librado de muchos vicios, que estuvieron ocultos o ignorados por ellos, por esta costumbre de confesar en general; y tanto los predicadores como los confesores se esforzaban en sacar a las personas de tal equivocación.¹³³

Here we can see the close relation between the practice of examen and propagation of the sacrament of reconciliation.

There is also the account of people who were helped by examen confession and communion every eight days, for example Polanco narrates the example of a woman with troubled conscience who was thus helped.¹³⁴ Many of such examples shed light on the benefits of the sacrament of reconciliation and the examen:

en el progreso de este año, como se volviesen por días más amantes de la pureza de la conciencia, no esperaban el tiempo señalado mensual, sino la mayor parte de ellos para tranquilidad de su conciencia determinaba una confesión general de toda su vida, y, para hacerlo con más exactitud, también ayudaban a la memoria con escritos; y mostraban realmente una gran veneración a los santos sacramentos, que los más mayores y más aún sus padres se admiraban, y observando el cambio de las costumbres en sus hijos, decían que aquella ciudad perpetuamente estaría muy obligada.¹³⁵

Y aunque los dos sacerdotes ya dichos cultivasen poco aquella viña por medio de la predicación, sin embargo, por las confesiones y por los ejercicios espirituales, que comenzaron a proponerse a algunos, y visitando las cárceles públicas, y allí purificando por las confesiones las conciencias de los detenidos, hacían un trabajo muy útil a la ciudad.¹³⁶

These examples vouch for the fact that the examen acted as a catalyst in improvement in spiritual life, be it for laity or consecrated people.

¹³³ *Chron.* vol. V, pp. 230-231.

¹³⁴ “Cierta mujer de la que su marido por mucho tiempo estaba ausente, y del cual no se sabía dónde estaba, la querían casar con otro; pero uno de nuestros Padres la apartó de este parecer, que favorecían sus parientes; y cuando primero ni aun siquiera podía ir al sacrificio de la Misa por el remordimiento de la conciencia, a esto fue conducida que cada ocho días se acercase a la confesión y a la comunión, y casi diariamente asistiese a la Misa.” *Chron.* vol. IV, p. 82.

¹³⁵ *Chron.* vol. VI, p. 302.

¹³⁶ *Chron.* vol. IV, p. 427.

As we have already said, many of the instances of the examen that Polanco has recorded were coupled with the sacrament of confession and they bore much fruit. Many a times the examen was a preparation for a general confession, as Polanco points out,

muchos frecuentaron con nosotros los sacramentos de confesión y de la comunión, ni solo en la Cuaresma, sino, en otros tiempos del año, seis confesores no podían satisfacer a tanta multitud; de donde no pocos se veían obligados a ir a otro sitio. El fruto de las confesiones era semejante a otros, que por el mismo ministerio en otros sitios se suelen producir; y como muchos hiciesen confesión de toda su vida, sucedía que como algunas cosas habían sido retenidas durante veinte o treinta años, como eran de otros, se restituían; y porque (eran muchos) los que deseaban hacer una confesión general de toda su vida, los nuestros se veían obligados a avisar a algunos para que aguardasen a un tiempo más oportuno.

Muchos, casi todos los penitentes de esta clase eran conducidos a una frecuente confesión y comunión con gran provecho suyo, y de estos algunos, antes de que fueran a acostarse, juntamente con sus hijos rezaban sus oraciones y hacían examen de conciencia, otros también con azotes, por penitencia, pero voluntariamente se azotaban, y algunos diariamente, de manera que necesitasen de freno. De estos también algunos a los mendigos y los agricultores, y a aquellos, que está en las tabernas, los llevaban al templo para escuchar misa y para confesar sus pecados; por la noche también iban a sus casas para hablar de aquello que estaba relacionado con su alma; y tanta mies de personas de esta clase llevaban a los nuestros, que como no hubiera tiempo suficiente para oírlos, fuera necesario llevarlos a otros monasterios de religiosos.¹³⁷

These examples from various parts of the world highlight the effectiveness of the examen in propagating faith among simple people, and we see that this was mostly practiced along with confession.¹³⁸ Thus we also notice that the examen along with other methods of praying were employed by the early Jesuits in forming people in faith.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Ibid., pp. 449-450.

¹³⁸ Polanco accounts for many such examples “Casi quinientos a este sermón antes del alba solían asistir, y, comenzando una hora antes de la luz hasta una hora de la noche siguiente, el P. Manuel se dedicaba en oír confesiones, no levantándose de su asiento, a muchos que se aceraban con mucho cariño para descubrir y curar a las heridas de su conciencia, que durante muchos años habían carecido de esta medicina saludable. A muchos de estos, que se habían confesado, les daba la comunión. La familia del Señor Jacobo fue también un ejemplo en la confesión.” *Chron.* vol. III, p. 81.

¹³⁹ See *Chron.* vol. IV, pp. 511-512. “Aprovecharon de modo admirable tanto en aquello que pertenece a la erudición como en esto a la piedad y aunque esto de descubría en la modestia y buenas costumbres, mientras se abstendían por muchos, en aquello que están acostumbrados a equivocarse, el aprovechamiento con más claridad se comprendía por los confesores; muchos usaban el cotidiano examen de conciencia, y deseaban ser enseñados en el modo de orar; algunos entraron en religión, y al comienzo de este año dos fueron admitidos en la Compañía, y otros en el progreso del año, los cuales casi se enviaban a Coimbra; en los domingos cada uno de los preceptores explicaba en su clase la doctrina cristiana a sus discípulos, acomodándose a la capacidad de ellos, y en la primera clase primero se exigía de ellos, lo que en el pasado domingo se explicó, relacionado con las virtudes y las buenas costumbres; luego se explicaban otras cosas;

7.1.2 In Religious Life

From the accounts of numerous places, we come to know that through a continual practice of the examen not only people grew in devotion and perfection in life but many joined the Society later on as well. Polanco provides the account of the practice of general confession of people who wanted to join the Society. Anyone who wished to join the Society were to make a general confession to some member of it,¹⁴⁰ and this confession was preceded by a thorough examination of conscience. The *Chronicon* reveals that

otros muchos deseaban ser escogidos para nuestra Compañía; pero se pensaba que su admisión debería ser diferida y favorecer en el buen propósito a los jóvenes en la frecuencia de los sacramentos y en la oración y en el examen de conciencia. Dos o tres entre los demás eran conspicuos entre sus compañeros. Las cartas de la India inflamaban no tan solo a estos sino a muchos otros.¹⁴¹

The practice of examining a candidate before admitting him into the Society also involved the general confession usually preceded by the examen. Polanco records some examples like a priest in Ferrara was admitted to the Society after due consultation and proper preparation that involved examination and confession.¹⁴² The *Chronicon* also records that

algunos también no solo todos los meses sino con más frecuencia comenzaron a acercarse a los sacramentos.”

¹⁴⁰ Cf. *Chron.* vol. I, p. 211. The account of the year 1547 says, “el Vicario de la alma ciudad le urgía a Ignacio, que designase a alguno de la Compañía, para el examen de aquellos, que debían ser promovidos a las órdenes sagradas; [...] o al que ocupase su lugar, qué hubiera encontrado en el examinado. Añadió también, para que confesasen generalmente de promover primero a alguno de los nuestros; luego si quisiesen ser examinados, fuera examinado por otro designado.”

¹⁴¹ *Chron.* vol. II, pp. 491-492.

¹⁴² “En el mes de Diciembre cierto sacerdote de la diócesis de Brescia, de nombre Organtino, el cual, escuchadas muchas cosas de la Compañía tanto en Brescia, como en otras partes, ya desde el mes Abril había determinado entrar en ella, vino a Ferrara; y ciertamente no solo, pues marchando a su casa materna de Brescia, a dos hermanos suyos, Juan Antonio de diez ocho años y Joaquín Bautista de diez y seis, habiéndolos exhortado a entrar en la misma Compañía, y haciéndolos compañeros de su propósito y de su viaje, pidió a los nuestros de Ferrara ser admitido con sus hermanos. Él tenía veinte cuatro años y versado en letras humanas. Pero como los nuestros juzgasen que se debía proceder maduramente, pensaron que no se les debería admitir con facilidad y le insinuaron que deberían ir a Roma. Pero como por tres días a cada uno también los examinasen con diligencia y los encontrasen sinceros e idóneos, los admitieron en Ferrara como huéspedes, hasta que consultasen al P. Vivario. Fue pues digna de alabanza su madre, viuda, a la cual no le quedaba ningún hijo, sin embargo, la vocación, que ella estimaba que era de Dios, en ningún modo la quiso impedir. El P. Organdino le había dejado a ella sus bienes para que les sirvieran (que decían que ascendía a dos mil ducados) mientras viviera, para que después de su muerte se hiciera aquello que a los Superiores de la Compañía le pareciera que se debía hacer.” *Ibid.*, pp. 201-202.

through these spiritual practices many were lead to religious life, other than the Society of Jesus.¹⁴³

Further, Polanco also has many accounts of the examen being practiced in houses of formation where it was an integral part of daily life. We bring together all such instances where the examen is mentioned, be it in professed houses or on houses of formation under this title religious life with the view to distinguish this practice undertaken by people in the parishes or in universities as we have just seen. First instance we know that the examen was introduced in the novitiates, as the *Chronicon* narrates:

introdujo también cierta costumbre de la casa de formación, y en cierta sala a modo de dormitorio colocó a treinta de aquellos que eran, más jóvenes y en la Compañía más nuevos y constituyó al P. León Enríquez para ellos el primer maestro de novicios; se consiguió de este modo que ellos aprovecharan más, y porque el Colegio era estrecho para tanta multitud, los restantes vivían con más comodidad. El prefecto de ellos procuraba que se exigiera de cada uno su modo de proceder, y observasen el silencio en sus tiempos, y la forma acostumbrada de meditar y de examinar la conciencia, y unos con el ejemplo de los otros se animaban con más facilidad, estando juntos, y se miraba por sus necesidades espirituales.¹⁴⁴

Porque sin embargo las ocupaciones, aunque santas y necesarias, llevaban consigo algo de distracción o de impedimento para la oración mental, la cual sin embargo junto con el examen de conciencia nunca la omitían; cierta casa en Punical fue establecida en donde pudieran recogerse en ciertos tiempos, para que pudieran dedicarse más a la meditación y a la oración y al trato de asuntos espirituales.¹⁴⁵

Fueron promulgadas reglas, y ciertamente escritas en pizarra, en las cuales se informaba cómo deberían comportarse tanto en el juego literario, como en las calles, en casa, como se hacía en el Colegio Romano. Se añadía el modo y el orden de examinar la conciencia antes del tiempo del descanso, y cuando se levantasen, de rogar a Dios y de darse y dedicarse todos a Dios; por todo esto los jóvenes se inflamaban mucho en el deseo de la virtud.¹⁴⁶

These examples, of Portugal and India with such diverse contexts, underline the fact that the examen was part of the formation of people who joined the Society.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ “Muchas jóvenes por la frecuencia de los sacramentos y otros ejercicios de piedad de tal manera en el espíritu aprovecharon que veinte y cinco de ellas se consagraron totalmente a Dios con el voto de pobreza, castidad y obediencia y llenaron con su óptimo olor a toda la ciudad.” Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ *Chron.* vol. II, p. 374.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 143-144.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 457.

¹⁴⁷ These instances are of the years around 1547, and we shall see later in work in chapter 5, how the rules of the Society were gradually formed incorporating these customs in formation.

Similarly, Polanco narrates the customs of the house of formation in Salamanca, in 1552:

en el Colegio de Salamanca el oficio de las casas de probación había que ejercerlo. [...] buena parte de ellos se entregaban al estudio de la teología, y estaban dotados de egregios talentos; y sin embargo en las pruebas de los novicios al mismo tiempo se ejercitaban. Estos novicios dedicaban dos horas de oración diariamente cuando los otros estudiantes dedicasen una sola, además del examen antes de la comida y del sueño, lo cual era común para todos; se les proponía a todos la misma meditación del evangelio y después de la comida, como a modo de recreación, cada uno el fruto que había sacado de ella lo comunicasen a los demás, y ciertamente con fruto no mediano, cuando los novicios de los veteranos por este motivos eran enseñados; después sin embargo este ejercicio se tuvo por demasiado serio, para que se tuviera en lugar de recreo.¹⁴⁸

We have the examples from Italy where similar practices were part of the formation of those who joined the Society. Polanco's narration here helps us to capture how the practice of the examen was introduced through the exhortations of Nadal, as per the instructions of Ignatius.¹⁴⁹

We know that the examen was part and parcel of a community's spiritual life and some spend more time in prayer other than what was prescribed by Ignatius in the *Constitutions*. Even when the length of prayer was disputed, the examen was always part of the prayer life and Polanco narrates such tension that existed in Colegio de San Felix.¹⁵⁰ There are other instances in the *Chronicon* where the practice of the examen in a community are recorded, always pointing to the fact that they were part of the routine of the house.

Los que se dedicaban a la filosofía, eran seis; los restantes se ocupaban en los trabajos de la casa; aunque algunos de estos por mucho tiempo se habían dedicado a otras facultades,

¹⁴⁸ *Chron.* vol. II, pp. 620-621.

¹⁴⁹ "En el mes de Julio vino a Padua el P. Nadal, y allí permaneció ocho o diez días, y desempeñado su oficio, a saber de Visitador o de Comisario, nos tuvo a nosotros muchas exhortaciones en este tiempo; y explicó lo que pertenece al instituto de la Compañía, pues ni habían recibido hasta este tiempo las constituciones. Y como determinase otros muchos asuntos útilmente, se marchó a otro lugar. Tanto en Padua como en Venecia explicaba esto principalmente, lo que pertenece a la práctica en el examen y en las constituciones, y en particular lo que se relaciona con la obediencia y la oración. De este modo redujo el tiempo de la oración a una hora, como por la mañana media hora; antes de la comida una cuarta parte de la hora; y antes de que se fueran a los cuartos le dedicasen otra cuarta parte a la oración después del examen. Esta era la mente del P. Ignacio que por los escolares, además de los dos exámenes, se diese a la oración tan solo media hora por la mañana, además de aquel tiempo que se dedicaba a oír la misa. Enseñaba también qué fruto debían sacar de la frecuencia de los sacramentos." *Chron.* vol. V, p. 162.

¹⁵⁰ See *Chron.* vol. III, p. 419.

en esto, que pertenece al provecho espiritual, trabajaban con seriedad. Los estudiantes se ocupaban menos en la oración y en la lectura de libros espirituales; aunque le dedicasen una hora todos los días a la oración, además de los exámenes de conciencia; y ciertamente comulgaban una vez todas las semanas, además del domingo.¹⁵¹

Conferían ellos mismos entre sí algunas veces de los misterios de la Pasión de Cristo. También había quien desease que se le enseñase el examen acostumbrado de la Compañía, para que él lo usase todas las noches. Hubo uno también que se acusó a sí mismo delante del precursor, de que una vez había jurado y por tanto que le mandase que se le castigase. Como el preceptor lo mandase, el mismo le urgía que le castigase con más severidad.¹⁵²

Thus, going over the history of the gradual growth of the Society, Polanco records many such instances when the daily examen was part of the tradition.¹⁵³

7.2 Observations

All the instances that mention Polanco are the practices of various communities and parishes around the world where the examination of conscience was practiced. The *Chronicon*, as an account of the happenings of the Society around the globe, provides us with the regular practice of the examen be it in educational institutions, parishes or in religious communities. We have seen that the majority of the instances are related with the sacrament of confession when the examen was presented as a tool to prepare well for cleansing one's conscience. As a means to purify oneself as well as to prepare for confession they are means of knowing faults and sins. Therefore, we club the examples in *Chronicon* as moralistic exercise.

An interesting point here is to note that all those who desired to enter the Society was made to go through a rigorous evaluation and the examen and confession were integral

¹⁵¹ *Chron.* vol. VI, p. 559.

¹⁵² *Chron.* vol. V, p. 564.

¹⁵³ There are many instances where the practice is mentioned along with the practice of confession. Following is an interesting account of such practice: “el marqués de Tavora, que era muy amigo de los nuestros, trajo a cierto monje de la Orden de San Francisco, el cual había vivido treinta años y más en religión, a esta casa de probación, para que fuera cultivado en los ejercicios espirituales; él, aunque era digno de veneración por su edad y su doctrina, con gran humildad recibía la enseñanza. Como celebrase la Misa en la capilla nuestra de arriba, nuestros hermanos en el mismo lugar hacían el examen, que se suele hacer antes de la comida. Como ya iba a elevar el Cuerpo del Señor, escuchada el toque de la campana, que los llamaba al refectorio, todos juntamente se salieron de aquella capilla. Aquel varón religioso dijo a uno de los nuestros: Había oído ciertamente de la obediencia de la Compañía, pero no lo creía. Pero ya experimento que es mayor de lo que refiere la fama.” *Ibid.*, p. 436.

part of it. Here too the concern was to make sure a clear conscience when such candidates were faced with a major decision.

8 Francisco de Borja

Francisco de Borja was born in the Duchy of Gandía as the eldest son of Juan de Borja and Juana de Aragon, on 28 October 1510 in Gandía, Spain. This noble son of the third duke of Gandía studied grammar and music at Zaragoza and had short stays at Valladolid, Granada, etc. He also served at the court of Charles V the Emperor in 1528 and married the lady of honour of the Empress, Eleanor de Castro in 1529. The death of the Empress Isabel at a young age left a deep impression on Borja who decided never to serve a Lord who dies.¹⁵⁴ In 1539 Borja was named the Viceroy of Cataluña a duty which he continued to carry out till 1543; during all these years Borja had already developed an intense interior life with frequent reception of sacraments, mortification, penances with long hours in prayer. Among the many who influenced him the Franciscans Salvador de Horta, Pedro de Alcántara, Juan de Tejada and the Jesuits Peter Faber and Antonio de Araoz merit special mention. At the death of his father, Borja became the fourth Duke of Gandía in 1546, but the death of his wife in March 1546 prompted the complete renunciation of all power. Borja made the Spiritual Exercises under Andrés de Oviedo and pronounced his vows – though secretly – of chastity and obedience to the general of the Society of Jesus on 2 June 1546. In 1548, with a special permission from the Pope, Borja pronounced his vows and remained in Gandía.

In 1550 Borja travelled to Rome and during his stay there he met with Ignatius to discuss his official entry into the Society. Other than financially helping the foundation of the Roman College and the construction of new Church in Rome Borja also played a part in getting the Spiritual Exercises officially approved and printed. He was ordained in 1551 and since then played great role in the governance of the Society and in starting new schools in Spain and Portugal, as the commissary-general. Borja was a decisive figure right from the First General Congregation where he urged all members to observe the Rules and the

¹⁵⁴ See Cándido de Dalmasés, “Borja, Francisco de,” in *DHCJ*, vol. II, pp. 1605-1611, here p. 1605-1606.

Constitutions of the Society. In 1564 Borja assumed his responsibility as the Assistant to the General and at the death of Laínez in 1565 he was made the Vicar General. The Second General Congregation elected Francis Borja as the General. He died in 1572 in Rome, having lead the Society to consolidation and greater expansion.

8.1 The *Tratados espirituales* and the Examen

The spiritual treatise of Francis Borja sheds more light on how the saint understood the practice of the daily examen and here we analyse his various treatises to better situate the daily examen. In his *tratados espirituales*, Borja talks of the examen on various occasions – sometimes as part of knowing oneself, other times for confessing better. In the treaty on spiritual exercises for everyday of the week (*tratado quinto llamado ejercicios espirituales repartido por todos los días de la semana*) Borja recommends examination of conscience as follows:

examinar la consciencia por la confesión mental, trabajando de tener dolor de sus pecados y proponiendo de confesarlo. Dirá un Pater noster y una Ave María por satisfacción, suplicando a Jesucristo, nuestro Señor disponga su ánima dándole la lumbre de su conocimiento y el fuego de su amor y que, desconfiando el alma de sus propias fuerzas, confío sólo en la bondad de Dios y en que al Redentor le fue presente esa su necesidad y rogó por ella al Padre eterno; u así pedirá la gracia para la oración diciendo: “Quia non possumus cogitare aliquid ex nobis, tanquam ex nobis, sed sufficientia nostra ex Deo est.” Veni, Creator Spiritus, mentes tuorum visita, imple superna gratia quae tu creasti pectora.¹⁵⁵

Borja proposes this examen before one enters into prayer every day. According to this treaty, the purpose of the exercises is to gain confusion based on two considerations – what God has done with us and what we have done for God. Borja proposed this consideration for each day of the week, at the end of which a suitable prayer is made. For him, then the examen at the beginning of such prayer forms a way to purify oneself.

¹⁵⁵ Francisco de Borja, *Tratados espirituales* (introducción y edición de Cándido de Dalmases), Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1964, p. 121.

8.1.1 To Know Oneself

In another treaty on knowing oneself, Borja proposes the examination of conscience as a means to know oneself better. Citing St. Bonaventure Borja says knowing oneself is necessary as it helps in knowing God better, for one who does not know himself cannot hope to know God.¹⁵⁶ He further says that though it is important yet difficult to know oneself, examining oneself is highly useful in spiritual life.

Convieni, pues, hacer juicio y entrar dentro de nosotros, examinando qué es lo que tenemos de parte nuestra, y así veamos lo que merecemos y a lo que estamos obligados, haciendo dos montones, uno de lo que tenemos de nuestra parte, y otro de lo que tenemos de Dios. Lo primero, considera bien qué cosa eras antes que fuese criado, y hallaras que nihil; de manera que eras menos que un poco de estiércol, pura privación, nada, sin cuerpo, sin alma, sin sentidos, y echa esta nada de tu montón.¹⁵⁷

Asking each one to consider what God, from all eternity, has been doing so as all would reach his abode, Borja proposes various considerations to create this sense of gratitude: considering how in spite of all the harm one has done, God shed his blood for humanity; all the sins one has committed and yet God showed mercy, etc. Against all this Borja proposes the daily examen as a means to be aware of what one really is:

lo cuarto, considera sabiamente tu vida, los pecados que cometiste y bienes que dejaste de hacer, y que por razón del desagrado, los pecados reiterados son mayores. Mira tus faltas y defectos, y espántate de la profundidad de tu miseria; y para mejor conocerte en esta parte, ayúdate destes medios: 1º Examen ordinario. 2º si te ciega el amor propio, para no conocer tus faltas, mírate en otro, que lo que pasa por el pasa por ti. Mira al justo, y por sus virtudes sacarías tus defectos. 4º. Mira lo que otro dice de ti, el cual verá mejor tus faltas que tú mismo. 5º. Ponte a contradecir un vicio y vencer pasiones, y entonces te descubrirá lo que hay en el hombre.¹⁵⁸

For Borja, the fear of God is another important aspect related to this type of knowing. When he says ‘del propio conocimiento nace el temor de Dios, de conocer uno quién ha sido para con Dios’ Borja wants to emphasise the importance of self-knowledge.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 278.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 282.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 284.

¹⁵⁹ Here he outlines the various levels of fear – temor inicial, temor filial, temor servil and temor reverencial. Cf. *ibid.* pp. 286ff. This is in line with what Ignatius talks in the *Sp. Ex.* about fear/love of the Divine

Borja affirms that as humans are inclined to sin and need God's mercy, and considerations on one's limitations and God's gratuitous gift help them know themselves better. In order to know oneself better he also suggests that we humble ourselves and deny our own interests, attribute all good to God rather than to oneself, thus one is clean of heart and gets peace of soul. Thus, we see, for Borja examination and humbling oneself are needed to grow in self-knowledge.

For Borja, examining one's thought is also very important because according to him actions are the fruit of thoughts and need to be evaluated: "pensamientos vanos nos muestran quien somos, porque son frutos de nuestra huerta, que el buen pensamiento no lo es ni sale della, que no podemos como de nosotros pensar cosa alguna que buen sea [...]." ¹⁶⁰

8.1.2 Examine the Entire Day – Changing the Old Man

The treatises on 'the exercise in order to find the presence of God throughout the day' reveal the heart of the examen of Borja when he talks of getting rid of the old man:

al tiempo de del acostar es bien desnudar, alma mía, el viejo hombre que se apega fácilmente entre día. Esto será por el examen de la conciencia, considerando los descuidos de aquel día para pedir perdón por ellos y para dar gracias al Señor del bien que se ha hecho y otras cosas. Desnudando los vestidos, pide al Señor, alma mía, desnude tus malos hábitos y costumbres, la vanidad, la parlería y tibieza, y lo que de este jaez te fatiga, para que después digas con la esposa: desnudé mi vestidura, ¿cómo la volveré a vestir? Lavé mis pies, ¿cómo los volveré a ensuciar? Quiere decir: dejé ya de murmurar, ¿cómo a ello? Dejé ya la vanidad del mundo, ¿cómo volveré a ella? ¹⁶¹

The comparison of the examen with changing of cloth and peeling off of the bad habits Borja emphasises the aspect of purification, i.e. removing of the soiled cloth of the whole day through the practice of the examen.

Majesty as motives [370]. See Terence O'Reilly, "Temor," in *DEI*, pp. 1676-1680. See also Hugo Rahner, *Ignatius the Theologian*, London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1990. pp. 25-29.

¹⁶⁰ Borja, *Tratados espirituales*, p. 335.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 385.

Borja proposed clean heart as requisite for finding God throughout the day. Many prayers of Borja talk about cleansing oneself by asking pardon for all sins and which is achieved through the examen. For he says,

aunque siempre se debe tener cuenta con pedir gracia, para llorar siquiera una lágrima cada día para lavar el alma de los polvos que se le pegan, y el día que no se llora supla el dolor que dello se tuviere por lágrimas de sangre que la voluntad con que se halla quisiera derramar, y no será menos agradable al Criador. [...] Esto se hará después de haber pedido al Señor perdón por la distracción: pedir gracias para aquellas personas y negocios que allí se ofrecen, y esto con toda brevedad.¹⁶²

He also proposed some questions as help to examen oneself, mainly by asking oneself what merit one has to receive such blessings.¹⁶³

In his exhortation to people Borja talked of clean heart as the abode of wisdom: “haz ahora, alma mía, el examen de la conciencia, pues entiendes que en el alma maligna no entra sabiduría, ni será justo hospedar al Señor en casa no limpia y barrida ni aderezada, siendo el Rey de los reyes, y Señor de los señores.”¹⁶⁴ Among the many other points to be kept in mind in order to find God during the day, Borja proposed the examen as a means to sanctify one’s day as well as to enter into prayer.

Después del examen se entre en los puntos de la meditación, como aparte se ha dicho y escrito, teniendo aviso especial que así debe dar gracias por la sequedad de la oración como por los gustos de ella, pues lo ordena todo el Señor para nuestro mayor bien, y no depende el mérito del gusto sensible, sino del acto de la voluntad y del amor con que se viene a alabar al Señor sin interés, antes en cierta manera sirven más a su costa los que reciben menos gustos y sin ellos perseveran en la oración, y ofreciendo la sequedad se conforman con la divina voluntad alegremente, y los que esto hicieren no serán menos bien pagados.¹⁶⁵

Though here Borja proposes the examen as a preparation to enter into prayer, we note that the aspect that he emphasizes is cleansing of one’s mind and getting rid of all sorts of distractions in prayer. In outlining the attitudes that one needs to have during the entire day

¹⁶² Borja, *Tratados espirituales*, p. 374.

¹⁶³ “¿Quién sois Vos, Señor, para llamarme a mí? Y ¿Quién soy yo para ser llamado de Vos? Aquí estoy, Señor, ¿qué queréis de mí?, ¿para qué soy bueno?, en qué me hallaste provechoso, que así me llamáis y traéis como por fuerza sin hacerme fuerza? ¿Qué saben, Señor, hacer mis manos sino obras astrosas y malas?” He proposed this under the title “Tratado espiritual de la oración,” in *ibid.*, p. 323.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Borja points to the aspect of finding God in all the events of the day where the examen has an important role.¹⁶⁶

In his treaty on exercises for people who are involved in important affairs of the world¹⁶⁷ Borja proposes some exercises to facilitate one's salvation, pointing out that the Lord in his infinite mercy has given many means for the salvation and only by carelessness can one lose it. "Señor benditísimo usa con el hombre el hacerle tan fácil y suave el camino de la salvación, que ninguna cosa convencerá tanto a los malos cuanto su propia conciencia, [...] como consista en la guarda de sus mandamientos."¹⁶⁸ In order to achieve the salvation he proposes the following:

primeramente, trabajando mucho el cristiano de no ser en cargo de restitución alguna, ora sea de fama, ora de hacienda: *quia non dimittitur peccatum nisi restituatur ablatum*. Y el que se viere libre desta restitución tenga grande aviso y cuidado de no volver a caer en esta obligación, pues el que ella estuviere no puede hacer obra alguna que sea agradable a nuestro Señor, pues no cumple lo que debe y puede. El segundo punto será, que cada noche, antes que se vaya a dormir, trabaje de traer a la memoria todo lo que ha hecho en aquel día, así en pensamientos, como en palabras, como en obras y omisiones, de cosas que según su estado o oficio era obligado a hacer, tomándose cuenta de todo lo susodicho muy particularmente, y teniéndola asimismo con las faltas que en sí hallare acerca dello, para que en el vencimiento y enmienda de aquellas faltas, tenga más particular cuidado el día siguiente.¹⁶⁹

Here we clearly see that Borja proposes the examination of conscience to look at one's thoughts, words and deeds, giving importance to personal responsibility. Along with the practice of examining one's day to take an account of sins Borja also suggests meditating on some mysteries of Christ as well as the use of sacraments. In the same treaty, Borja exhorts "que cada día, siquiera un cuarto de hora en toda su vida ocupe en meditar la vida de Cristo [...]. Lo cuarto, tener una firme determinación, y trabaje que se ponga por obra el frecuentar el santo sacramento de la penitencia, confesándose cada quince días o veinte, o a lo menos cada mes, porque la confesión continuada da nuestro Señor mucha gracia para

¹⁶⁶ In this treaty he suggests what to do at various times of the day like while rising, when getting up from bed, while dressing, while entering the chapel, at various stages of Mass, etc. See *ibid.*, pp. 370ff.

¹⁶⁷ The title reads 'Ejercicio espiritual para caballeros y personas ocupadas.'

¹⁶⁸ Borja, *Tratados espirituales*, p. 412.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 412-413.

apartarnos de le ofender, y para crecer en virtud.”¹⁷⁰ So this prayer complements the examination of conscience and helps the person to grow in devotion.

From all these it is amply clear that for Borja, the examen is done in order to clean oneself of sins, to get rid of the ‘old man,’ to ask pardon for sins of the day and thus to be purified. The emphasis of Borja on confusion for one’s sins, considered against all the good that God has done, aims at purifying oneself. By knowing oneself through the examen, Borja hopes that one would always grow closer to God. As he pointed out, the examen was related to the sacrament of confession. The emphasis on a clean heart as the dwelling place of God clearly points to the importance he gave to the examen as a moralistic exercise.

8.2 The *Spiritual Diary* and the Examen

The *Spiritual Diary* of Francis Borja reveals the depth of his spiritual life especially the mystical aspects, and the entries in the diary about the examen highlight Borja’s preoccupation about having a clear conscience. The entries in the diary of little more than four years, illumine various aspects of Borja’s life in those crucial years when he was elected as the vicar general and later as the Superior General of the Society. Scholars are of the opinion that the entries in the diary reaffirm the deep impression left by the death of the empress Elisabeth, the struggles with the inquisition and his vocation and election as general.¹⁷¹ Borja all through the diary makes entries with regard to past events thanking God for major events of his life – his conversion, his vows, the “cross of generalate,” – which permits us to fathom the depth of his longing to be united with God.

While analysing the practice of daily examen of Borja in his *Diary*, it is important to note the whole aspect of scruples as a key element. Often the concern of Borja was to pray for needs of all sorts of people, his struggle with health, scruples about the length of

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 413.

¹⁷¹ “En resumen, a tres grupos principales pueden reducirse las fechas correspondientes a su vida pasada que Borja recuerda en el *Diario*. Son éstas por orden cronológico: 1º. La muerte de la Emperatriz, 2º. Las distintas fechas de sus votos y la de su determinación de entrar en la Compañía, 3º. Distintas fechas relativas a la gran tribulación del 59 al 60.” See also the analysis of various entries of Borja in Máximo Ezpeleta, “El diario espiritual de San Francisco de Borja,” in *Manresa* 35 (1963) pp. 121-132, here p. 132.

the examen, etc., and the scholars point out¹⁷² that scruples could become a key to interpret the experience in the diary.¹⁷³ Scholars say that though scruples are part of persons in conversion or transition, the presence of this cannot be ruled out in people with much deeper levels of spiritual life,¹⁷⁴ and here we want to emphasize that in Borja's case the preoccupation could be about maintaining a highly ascetic life. This would indeed be a key element in the analysis of the practice of examen in the life of Borja as Ruiz Jurado points out,

siempre le vemos reaccionar en humildad, petición y deseos de abrazarse a la cruz de Cristo, sin dejar de hacer contra la tendencia a la que le inclina el escrúpulo. Su vida continúa en el tono normal ordinario; aunque, alguna que otra vez, tenga que volver a pasar por la misma experiencia y tornar a reaccionar contra la misma debilidad. No parece un caso alarmante de escrúpulos en 'actitud escrupulosa;' sino que ellos fueron un elemento más, que le concedió el Señor en su vida, para que realizara aquel 'vivir muriendo' 'al pie de la cruz,' que le había hecho desear, movido por su amor.¹⁷⁵

With these observations about the Diary we analyse the daily examen of Borja, as presented in the Spiritual Diary.

¹⁷² Manuel Ruiz Jurado points out that scruples occupied a large part of his concerns. "El Diario nos permite entrever que en medio de su ordinaria consolación, y de las frecuentes y altísimas comunicaciones divinas, Borja no se veía libre de sentir de vez en cuando la punzada humillante y angustiosa de los escrúpulos. Este año los anota varias veces en junio y octubre. Más frecuente resulta todavía la preocupación por el examen: una y otra vez decide que debe hacerlo más breve. Y, en cuanto a las tentaciones, escribe hacia fines del año: "Cuanto a las pedradas del hombre viejo, no me espante; que cuanto más se defiende la fortaleza, tanto más gloria del que la vence" (22 dic. 66)." The introductory comments in San Francisco de Borja, *Diario espiritual (1564-1570)* (edición crítica, estudio y notas Manuel Ruiz Jurado), Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 1997, p. 121.

¹⁷³ See also Ruiz Jurado's comments on scruples: "por lo que respecta a los escrúpulos, puede servirnos de indicación precisa el 7 de junio del 66: "En el examinar, los escrúpulos y la forma del para ganar tiempo." El 17 pide: "Lo del examen breve y otras cosas." Y el 19: "Pidióse quitarse los escrúpulos." Varias veces vuelve a repetir su problema del examen más breve. Parece que los escrúpulos quedan relacionados con el tiempo de su examen. Otro indicio hay que nos lleva a relacionar los escrúpulos de Borja con los afectos del corazón. Escribe el 25 de diciembre del 65: "Lo de los escrúpulos. ítem, que cuanto más se mortifica el corazón, menos serán ellos." Borja, *Diario espiritual*, p. 129.

¹⁷⁴ "Tampoco el fenómeno de los escrúpulos es excepcional en almas santas, aun en los últimos años de su vida. Sabemos hoy que el escrúpulo es un fenómeno más propio de épocas de transición y conversión, y que si es endémico, responde generalmente a un disturbio psíquico profundo." Borja, *Diario espiritual*, p. 130.

¹⁷⁵ Ruiz Jurado in Borja, *Diario espiritual*, p. 132.

8.2.1 The Daily Examen to be Pure in Conscience

A quick glance at the entries in the Diary reveal the major concerns of his life during the period of the entries in the diary: gratitude for all the gifts received and his struggles with life as the General. When we analyse these entries based on what we have seen above, we see that in the personal life of Borja, the preoccupation was to keep away from even slightest instances of sin as well as to maintain a clear conscience, and the examen was indispensable in this regard. For, he writes

pedí gracia para guardarme del ocio que es origen de todos los males etc. 20 - pedí la virtud de la pobreza/ acordándome del voto del no alargarla / y no dispensando etiam in minimo. 21 pedí gracia y lumbre para ser defendido de las ilusiones [60] del demonio/ y + tentaciones, para atender a las sólidas virtudes, y passar adelante en el servicio del Señor/. 22 pedí gracia para examinar más perfectamente la conciencia. 23 pedí gracia para no encubrir ninguna tentación a mi Superior etc. con sujeción verdadera a su determinación. 24 pedí gracia para prevenir las tentaciones, con sus contrarios etc.¹⁷⁶

When Borja asks for the grace to grow in perfection in his life he is expressing his desire that had sprouted years before when he was still a duke, and this ardent desire to grow in perfection is seen in the entries of subsequent days as well:

pedí que cada día más perfectamente renuncie al mundo etc. para bivar solo a xpo. 5 pedí conocimiento para entender el beneficio que el Señor me haze quando otros me dizen mis faltas porque son mis ángeles. 6 pedí la virtud de la pobreza en el comer beber vestir calzar etc. 7 pedí gran conocimiento para persuadirme cómo lo peor deve ser siempre para mí en lo de casa. 8 pedí me dé gracia para hazer y servir en las cosas de mayor repugnancia/, [v] 9 pedí gracia para obedecer a cada uno en su officio.¹⁷⁷

These entries indicate the overwhelming concern of Borja for perfection in the life that he had chosen, by living faithfully the vows as well as by keeping all the Rules of the Society.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 196.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ At the beginning of the diary the concern of Borja was to meditate on the rules of the Society in order to grow in his vocation and to renounce the world. Borja asked for more grace to renounce the world, to grow in humility, etc. In the beginning of July 1564 he writes: “[...] pedí que la sapiencia que comencé esta su compañía la conserve y rija. 2 que yo coopere y responda a esta vocation/ como lo devo. pedí mayor fortaleza y lumbre para guardarlo perfectamente etc.” Ibid.

Further, the entire of March 1565, Borja talks about the need to examine himself well. While mentioning the many prayers he made, Borja wrote of the urgency of examining himself: “lo de las ovejas, si bolví[a] aparecer/ se pidía misericordia [...] confusión en todas las cosas orando comiendo etc. consolación etc. item el arder el alma, como el monte de moysén /. para después merecer oyr al Señor [...] item examinar más presto etc.”¹⁷⁹ In November of the same year, while recording his meditation and consolations Borja talks of the examen in the following way:

convertere anima mea in réquiem tuam/. ingredietur et egredietur, et pasc[u]a inveniet/.
11 la obediencia de Xo/ del pesebre etc. y la muerte [...] 13/ joan al pecho, si una vez fue tanto don, qué será tantas vezes. 14 idem examen. 15 la última cena. 16 idem. 17 desnudóse x^o para la :+ y yo para la cama, reposó en el sepulcro después de la :+ y yo. dormiam et requiescam composición de lugar.¹⁸⁰

The diary talks about the preparations for the meditations as well as of the composition of the place where Borgia identified his going to bed with the laying of Christ in the tomb. In a way we can conclude that for Borgia the treaty on the exercises to find the presence of God where the central concern is peeling off of the old man and keeping purity of conscience through the examen are related.¹⁸¹

8.2.2 Scruples and the Examen

We have mentioned that for Borgia the struggle with scruples and the examen are closely linked. Often in the diary Borja mentions of the scrupulosity regarding various aspects of life and the examen was an instrument in finding peace from such struggle. In November 1565 Borja wrote: 1^o in die omnium Sanctorum. idem E E pidióse la brevedad en el examen con la lumbré del Señor/, pidióse spes. de ver en él .y. Alia multa +. 2^o idem Em E consfolación]. Anima* defunctorum. item que así como el ángel bueno mueve las aguas. para sanar a los enfermos./ así el ángel malo mueve la laguna de los malos

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 221.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 253.

¹⁸¹ See tratado 22 “Ejercicios para buscar la presencia de Dios en todo el día” in Borja, *Tratados espirituales*, p. 385.

pensamientos para enfermar al que está sano/, pediré/ quel Señor mande/sosegar el mar./, etc.¹⁸² And in March and June of the subsequent year we find similar entries:

a 4° idem E scon[solución]. Se determinó hazer .3. veces consulta de reglas, en la semana iuxta decretum etc. et alia, quae commissa sunt g[enera]li. 5° idem E s con[solatio] m[agna]. item el para siempre para siempre, escribiese/, item la desculpa para el. c. [v] item el examen más breve item ut dilectio qua dilexisti filium tuum in nobis sit etc. a .6. idem E poco enfer[mo].¹⁸³

7° idem E + con[solución]. pedí que al loco por justicia le atan. conso[lación]. / quel governador lo provea/, en el examinar los escrúpulos, y la forma dél. para ganar tiempo/. [...] a 15 idem E :+: a 16 idem + a 17 idem E :+: pidióse lo del examen breve y otras cosas.¹⁸⁴

The entries in the diary corresponding to October 1566 reveal the fact that while Borja earnestly prayed for different needs, he was also assaulted by scruples. His concern was to keep a clean heart and to avoid scruples that plagued him for long.¹⁸⁵

However, we find that in 1567 the concern was less to do with scruples:

a 26 idem E + item pedir al padre a él, y memoria y potencia, [v] item al hijo y a él, y sapiencia y sentimiento de su pasión. Ítem al [E]sp. Sto. a él. y su amor, y vida en él. item consolación] sp[e]s. item el examen más corto/, post sacrum/. comencóse a pedir/, que el Señor me Heve/, o me dé lo que se le pide/ que es [289] bivir en él, para él etc. ofreciéndose las missas por ello/, item en las oraciones de la compañía.¹⁸⁶

Here we see that Borja's prayer was about becoming more like Christ and to live in Him.

8.3 Observations

The spiritual diary reveals that Borja's concern was always to be close to God, to be away from sin: he preferred to die before committing even a venial sin.¹⁸⁷ The

¹⁸² Borja, *Diario espiritual*, p. 248.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 269-270.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

¹⁸⁵ For example one entry of October reads "a 11 idem E :+: cons[olatio] en hazer procurador y procura/, de toda mi voluntad/ a x°.n.s./ item in lumine tuo videam lumen. item in medio cordis mei/ lo que haze [v] en el corazón destruido por el pecado/ :+: las obras del Señor/ ítem lo del examen más breve/, ítem la vida nueva en oración. levantar. Operaciones: dexar las menos necesarias, item conso[lación] :+: :+: :+: +." *ibid.*, p. 293.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

¹⁸⁷ "Ofrecióse de morir antes que venialmente pecar." Cf. *ibid.* pp. 130ff.

preoccupation of Borgia was to keep away from sin and to enjoy as much time in prayer as possible, and he was tormented by scruples with regard to long periods of prayer and diligent examen. Whenever Borgia was tempted to have long prayers he acted against it by shortening the time to counter the scruples.¹⁸⁸ Borja also believed that the more one was mortified the better one had control over the scruples.

Therefore, an analysis of the diary reveals that the preoccupation of Borja, while praying for different needs, was often to resist the temptation to go on praying. When attacked by scruples Borja relied on the examen, and though he was deeply aware of what was going on in his soul, he was also confused as how to resist such temptations. Based on what we have seen so far about the diary, we can conclude that the examen served as the tool to address the temptations. The examen, then, is related to the scruples about the length of prayer and Borja practiced the principle of *agere contra* to deal with it. In all these practices Borja overwhelmingly used the moralistic examen. It is clear from the fact that the concern of Borja was to keep away from any sin, i.e. not to allow sin to destroy his soul. The desire of Borja to renounce the world more and more, to keep away from even the smallest sin, to examen the conscience perfectly so as not to allow sin to invade the soul, etc. allude to a moralistic examen.

9 Conclusion

A quick analysis of the practice of the examen in Ignatius and his early companions underline the fact that the *Exercises* form the foundations on which all have relied for an encounter with God. Just as Ignatius, his companions too shared this rich resource with people around them. Ignatius helped people in their needs through letters and instructions to live their experience of God and he exhorted them to be faithful to the daily examen, no matter what the circumstances.

¹⁸⁸ As we have already indicated, the scruples and the tendency to shorten the examen are related. Ruiz Jurado argues that Borja was putting into practice Ignatian principles on dealing with scruples, as he outlined in the *Spiritual Exercises*. See the commentary of Ruiz Jurado in Borja, *Diario spiritual*, pp. 130-131.

From among the first companions of Ignatius, the importance of examination of conscience, especially that of the particular examen, is clearly seen in the life of Peter Faber, who had waited long to make the Exercises. The personal diary of Borja too reveals that the examen played an important role not only in his conversion but all through his life. The various examples of the examen in his diary that we have seen show that the examen was an important part of spiritual life, especially as an antidote against scruples. We can also affirm that the examen was important in the personal life of other companions like Jay, Nadal and Salmerón.

On the other hand, we have abundant examples of the examen being employed in pastoral and spiritual care: first, we saw that the letters of Ignatius addressed the concerns of educational institutions in general in the sense that the examen would be part of the routine. Secondly, Ignatius talked of the examen as a tool in reformation of a monastery or an individual who is in the process of reformation. Thus, the letters reveal the mind of Ignatius with regard to the practice of the examen in varying circumstances and for all classes of people. For Ignatius, conscience was the most sacred part of an individual and often he invokes the conscience in important matters,¹⁸⁹ and so the need to review and examine it carefully. In this regard, we have seen that Ignatius recommended the examen to scholastics who are involved in studies, to those who were participating in the Council of Trent, to Jesuits as well as for colleges in missions, to communities which needed guidance on obedience, or to individuals who needed correction in their life. The examples in the *Chronicon* of Polanco support the same view. Hence, the emphasis of the examen varies from evaluation of behaviour to examining the motive behind such behaviour, from moralism to discerning the root cause of imperfection in life. Therefore, we can conclude that Ignatius changes the emphasis of the examen according to the matter involved: the majority of the letters that we have seen focus on the moralistic aspect of examen, while others the focus of the examen shifted to prudence in decision making, *prudencia santa*.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. *Epp.* I, letter 19, pp. 145-147; letter 169, pp. 495-510; letter 18, pp. 551-562; *Epp.* II, letter 790, pp. 494-495; XII, Appendix, letter 3, pp. 632-654; and so on.

A detailed analysis of the way the examen was treated by Ignatius – especially in his correspondence – and the way the companions who shared close relation propagated the same, highlight the fundamental role of the daily examen right from the beginning. We have seen that the emphasis has been on the moral aspect of this exercise, and in the next chapter we would like to turn our attention to look at the works and life of other Jesuits who imbibed the spirit of Ignatius and propagated the same across the globe.

Chapter 3

The Examen in the Second-Generation Jesuits

1 Introduction

Within a short span from its foundation, the Society of Jesus grew not only in numbers,¹ but in its presence and influence especially in Spain and Italy, among many other countries. While Ignatius the founder was busy with the administration of the new Order at Rome, many of his first-companions were labouring in the vineyard of the Lord elsewhere. Notwithstanding the distance, Ignatius and his *Spiritual Exercises* remained the core around which spiritual life was being built. In the last chapter we have studied how some of these companions – whom we called the first-generation Jesuits – lived and transmitted the spiritual exercise of examining one’s conscience. Continuing in the same line, in this section we would like to analyse the life and works of some of Jesuits whom we term as

¹ At the time of the first GC, there were 1,000 Jesuits and by the turn of the century there were more than 10,000. Cf. John W. Padberg, et al, *For Matters of Greater Moment: First Thirty Jesuit General Congregations*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1994, p. xv.

second-generation Jesuits, though some of them have shared space with Ignatius and worked largely in the latter half of the sixteenth century.

The spiritual climate of the era under consideration was not much different from that of Ignatius, and yet there were different approaches as the after-effects of the Council of Trent, counter-reformation was setting in, and so on. There was also a sense of new direction in moral teachings and some Jesuits have contributed much to the development of moral teachings of the Church. Though some of the authors whom we study had personal contact with the founder, others drew from what they inherited through their companions. Such a scenario, coupled with the amusing growth and expansion of a Jesuit culture, would make our study interesting when we look at how these Jesuits dealt with the practice of the examen.

Some of the authors whom we have chosen to study, while being spokespersons of a new spirituality of the Society of Jesus, were well-acclaimed spiritual guides, while others have their fame for being mystics. In the following pages we look out for the role they assign to the practice of examen that was so dear to Ignatius of Loyola. Among the many possible authors, we have chosen a few as representatives of this century, be it Antonio Cordeses, Gil González Dávila, Alonso Rodríguez, Luis de la Palma or Luis de la Puente.²

2 Antonio Cordeses and Perfection in Life

Antonio Cordeses, born in 1518, joined the Society in 1545 after studying law. He taught philosophy for a short while from 1551³ at Gandía and was rector there from 1553 to 1560 while being also the '*lector de casos de conciencia*.'⁴ Cordeses also held the post of Comisario of Spain and Portugal from 1554.⁵ He was the provincial of Aragón between 1560 and 1566 and then superintendent of the college at Coimbra⁶ where most of his

² Other possible authors of this century would be Juan de Plaza, Francisco Ariaz, Diego Álvarez de Paz and Pedro Sánchez.

³ Cf. *Chron.* vol. II, p. 345.

⁴ In 1554 he held this role teaching Moral theology. Cf. *Chron.* vol. IV, p. 347.

⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 346.

⁶ Cf. *Complementa*, vol. II, p. 646.

spiritual writing was written and began to be known. He was also the Rector of Penitentiary of Roma for a short while, and he attended the first General Congregation in his capacity as the procurator of Aragón, that elected Diego Laínez as the general.⁷ The importance of this learned Jesuit is known also by the fact that Laínez considered making him provincial of Portugal in 1564 and Francis Borgia proposing him as Visitor to India, in 1567.⁸ In short, Cordeses was an important figure in the early years of consolidation of the Society, for being the rector of important colleges of Gandía, Valencia, as well as the one who attended all the first four General Congregations.⁹ Notwithstanding the acclaimed holiness and virtues, Cordeses was not immune to controversies with regard to his style of prayer,¹⁰ especially of affective type.¹¹

Cordeses deals with the examen under three treatises: *Tratado de las tres vidas*, *Tratado de la oración mental* and *Tratado de la vida purgativa*. In *Tratado de las vidas* he describes *vida activa*, *vida contemplativa* and *vida mixta* as a midway or a mixture of active and contemplative life. The examen is presented as one of the four conditions in active life.

2.1 The Examen in the *Tratado de las tres vidas*

Human beings approach life in one of the three ways namely “*vida activa*, *vida contemplativa* and *vida mixta*.”¹² Each of these states is distinct from one another and varying in grade because the *vida mixta* is the most perfect. The *vida activa* is the one where the acts are outside the mind, particularly those extrinsic matters like cultivation of the earth, carpentry, etc. In contrast to this, the *vida contemplativa* constitutes in knowing and

⁷ Cf. Padberg, *For Matters*, p. 715.

⁸ *Nadal* vol. III, p. 410.

⁹ Cf. Padberg, *For Matters*, pp. 715-716; Antonio Cordeses, *Obras Espirituales del P. Antonio Cordeses, S.I.*, Aurelio Yanguas (ed.) Madrid: CSIC, 1953, p. viii.

¹⁰ The role of Cordeses in the Ignatian tradition proper is debated today, especially the style of ‘*affective prayer*’ that was propagated by him. See Philip Endean, “The Strange Style of Prayer: Mercurian, Cordeses and Alvarez,” in Thomas M. McCoog (ed.), *The Mercurian Project, Forming the Jesuit Culture*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004, pp. 351-397.; Bernardo Bravo, “El P. Antonio Cordeses, S.I., y el grupo espiritual de Gandía,” in AA.VV., *Corrientes espirituales en la España del siglo XVI*, Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1963, pp. 393-395.

¹¹ See also GEI (ed.), *Escritos esenciales de los primeros jesuitas*, Madrid/Santander/Bilbao: UPCo/Sal Terrae/Mensajero, 2017, 791ff.

¹² Cordeses, *Obras espirituales*, p. 3.

speculating things and contemplating natural and supernatural matters. The *vida mixta*, according to Cordeses is one that embraces both active and contemplative life. “La vida mixta abraza las dos vidas, activa y contemplativa, no por via de servir la una a la otra, sino de principal intento; de manera que así como pretende la una, pretende también la otra.”¹³

Cordeses in his treaty on life, divides the *vida activa* into three types/genre: the first type is of active science like moral philosophy, medicine, law, liberal arts, arithmetic, etc.¹⁴ The second type includes works of moral virtues (“obras de las virtudes morales”) like prudence and justice. The third type is based on understanding and affections and he calls them works of ‘mechanical arts’ (“obras de las artes mecánicas”). Perfection in this active life, or life of Martha, consists in four things, namely: being in the grace of God; to act justly, in a convenient way, in the given circumstance; meticulous prayer; and daily examination of conscience. For Cordeses the fervent prayer has the following five reasons:

el acudir el activo a la oración es por cinco cosas: una es para descansar del cansancio de la action que es grande; 2º para examinar las obras delante de Dios, si son buenas de su género y qué fines lo mueven a hazerlas y con qué circunstancias las ha de hazer, y qué embargos o que impedimentos se le pueden ofrecer, para prevenir o declinarlos; 3º para resignarlas en Dios y hazerlas animado en su confianza; 4º para cobrar xugo de devoción y fervor de charidad y alientos y fuerças para hazerlas.¹⁵

For Cordeses prayer is also a moment of examining one’s actions and judging them whether they had been right or what were the aim of such actions. Cordeses advocates examen at the end of the day in order to judge one’s actions and he says, “la 4ª es que cada día por la tarde antes de acostarse examine su conciencia y se arrepienta de aquello en que hallare aver faltado y proponga de nuevo la enmienda.”¹⁶ With regard to perfection in the works of active life he recommends a balanced action, one that is done with interest and application. Cordeses warns of the danger of either too much or too little liking because too little bears hardly any fruit while too much interest disturbs the peace of mind.¹⁷

¹³ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁷ “[...] la primera es que emprenda las obras con afición y sollicitud competente y no demasiada ni poca, porque la poca afición y sollicitud haze que el hombre se le dé poco de perder las buenas coiuncturas, y

2.2 Mental Prayer and the Examen

Antonio Cordeses places mental prayer (oración mental) as a way of practical knowing. He divides the contemplative life, that of María, into *natural* and *sobrenatural*: *natural* having its goal of knowing and one that is based on scholastic theology, while *sobrenatural* is based on mystical theology and prayer. The supernatural contemplative life has the aim of moving the will, and to love and to desire the truth or the real: “la vida contemplativa que es por el conocimiento speculativo es de la theología scholastica y positiva, la que es el conocimiento práctico es de la theología mixtica y oración mental.”¹⁸ For Cordeses the ultimate aim of prayer is the union with God, to be transformed and to become like God: “esta unión es una transformación del hombre en Dios, con que el hombre, perdidas sus condiciones y qualidades que lo abaten y envilescen, se reviste de las de Dios y se convierte en El de tal manera que se haze otro dios y se hace una mesma cosa con el mesmo, de la manera que puede la criatura rational convertirse en Dios en la vida presente por fee, sperança y charidad perfectas.”¹⁹

While talking about the way of perfection Cordeses talks of a beginning and a progress, where the beginners need to purify themselves from sins to reach the desired perfection and this is an important aspect for us to understand how he places the examen as a purifying element.

Este camino tiene comienço y progresso. El comienço, después del desseo vivo de la perfección consiste en purificar y limpiar su anima de las horras de los pecados y vicios. El progresso del mesmo camino consiste en alumbrar su entendimiento con el conocimiento, ponderación, estima y juicio de las cosas de fee, pero primero no entiendas esto quanto al tiempo, sino quanto a la intención, y principalmente con el conocimiento de Dios y de sus atributos y de sus obras [...]. Consiste assímesmo el progresso deste camino en inflamar su voluntad y affecto con el aumento de la sperança y charidad y de todas las otras virtudes y dones del Espíritu Sancto.²⁰

aun que hurte el cuerpo a muchas buenas obras y que haga las que hiziere con mucha imperfección.” Ibid., pp. 8-9.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 19.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 20.

While affirming that the mental prayer is the way to reach God he also points out other ways to arrive at the same: “fuera de la oración mental, que es trato del hombre con Dios, con otros seis ejercicios trata el hombre con el mesmo Dios, porque o son cierta manera de oración mental o equivalen a ella. Estos son oír la palabra de Dios. Leer libros devotos y píos, escribir cosas espirituales, rezar oraciones vocales, oír los oficios divinos, mirar y contemplar imágenes devotas.”²¹ According to Cordeses the examination of conscience is a mental prayer that involves the understanding and will, for he says: “la oración mental se diffine, que es una elevación de la mente a Dios por un pío y humilde affecto. Dizesse que es elevación de la mente: la mente tiene dos potencias: entendimiento y voluntad. La elevación, que hazemos de la oración, no es de solo el entendimiento ni sola la voluntad, pero del entendimiento y voluntad juntamente, esto es, por conocimiento y affecto.”²² For Cordeses, the examination of conscience therefore is a mental prayer and not a vocal prayer, since the two faculties of the mind are involved.

Oración mental is further divided into intellectual and affective²³ based on the amount of time and effort invested in such understanding. When more time is dedicated to the act of understanding God or the mysteries of Christ or our sins, it is termed as intellectual: “la oración intelectual es una elevación del entendimiento a Dios por conocimiento, ponderación, y estima, y juicio de Dios o de las cosas divinas, para tener a cada una en lo que es razón, a fin de cobrarles el affición que se les deve.”²⁴ By terming the prayer as elevation of understanding through knowledge Cordeses implies knowing what is not known or to know better what was already known. And this sort of knowing is different from speculative knowledge which has the sole objective of knowing where as the ‘practical’ knowledge involves the will. “El otro conocimiento es práctico, que va siempre acompañado de la voluntad y la va siempre moviendo a diferentes actos, de manera que no puede hazer otra cosa; por esso este conocimiento consiste en ponderar, estimar y juzgar

²¹ Ibid., p. 25.

²² Ibid., p. 53.

²³ Cordeses says, “la oración mental es de dos maneras: la una es intelectual, la otra affectiva.” He bases himself on the spiritual writers like St. Bonaventure and Hugo of Balma. See Cordeses, *Obras espirituales*, notes on p. 55.

²⁴ Cordeses, *Obras espirituales*, p. 57.

como conviene las cosas.”²⁵ This judging and weighing are a kind of evaluation, an evaluation of good or bad, better or worse, etc. So, when Cordeses talks of examination of conscience as part of intellectual mental prayer he understands as knowing good or evil.

2.2.1 Oración intelectualiva

Cordeses divides the *oración intelectualiva* into three types:

la oración intelectualiva tiene 3 especies: la 1ª es cogitación, la 2ª meditación, la 3ª contemplación. La cogitación es una breve elevación del pensamiento a Dios, así es para todo tiempo y lugar. La meditación es con detenimiento de tiempo, y así no es para todo tiempo y lugar: usamos della quando de propósito nos ponemos en un rincón, apartados de los estorbos, para tener un rato de consideración de Dios. La contemplación es la perfecta oración intelectualiva, y así no es de todos sino los perfectos.²⁶

According to Cordeses “la meditación es una elevación del entendimiento a Dios por conocimiento, ponderación y estima y juicio de Dios o de las cosas divinas, proveída con detenimiento de tiempo,”²⁷ and the examination of conscience is one of the ways to dispose oneself for this kind of understanding. He presents five requisites for a good meditation where a good disposition of the body and mind is one of the important conditions. Such disposition of the body is achieved by avoiding the extremes of hunger, thirst, tiredness, cold, heat or sleep, and equally important is the body posture which is neither too rigid nor too relaxed. The examination of conscience serves as a means to dispose the mind in turn.

La Buena disposición del ánimo está en que por aquel rato sepamos dexar todas las ansias y cuidados, y si somos vexados o señoreados de alguna pasión, como de amor desordenado o de odio o de ira o de desseo, lo sepamos también mortificar, o a lo menos, mitigar, por aquel rato, porque las grandes ansias y las vehementes passiones nos distrahen y inquieten y aun nos roban cada una para sí. La mesma quietud del ánimo requiere que sepamos reprimir por aquel rato el continuo fluxo de los pensamientos vanos y vagueaciones impertinentes. A la misma disposición del ánimo pertenece que la meditación tenga el comienzo humilde, tal es si comienza por el examen de la consciencia y arrepentimiento de los peccados o con la anichilacion y desprecio de sí mismo o con invocación de todos los Sanctos, rezando la letanía hasta Omnes Sancti et Sanctae intercedite pro nobis.²⁸

²⁵ Ibid., p. 58.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 60.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 65.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 71.

Here again the examination is presented as a way to check one's sins and to grow out of it.

2.2.2 Oración *affectiva*

The second type of the *oración mental* that Cordeses proposes is the affective prayer, *oración affectiva*. “La oración *affectiva* es una elevación de la voluntad a Dios por algún *affecto* sin prevenir consideración alguna. Dícese elevación de la voluntad, porque no menos valor tiene la voluntad del hombre para elevarse a Dios que el entendimiento.”²⁹ For Cordeses there are two ways in which the will is raised to God, mediate and immediate: mediate when the will is raised to love and desire God while that which is mediated by the creation is immediate. According to Cordeses the affective prayer is superior to intellectual prayer because there is less chance of errors, it is easier, it is much shorter and helps unite with God better. He cites compunction for one's sins and loathing of vices as examples for elevation of the will in the affective way of praying but does not treat examination of conscience having any place in the *oración mental*.³⁰

The three manners of affective prayer proposed by Cordeses are *las aspiraciones*, *la affectiva*, and *affectiva suspensa*. He defines them in the following way: “las aspiraciones son unos *affectos* breves de la voluntad con que nos elevamos a Dios.”³¹ “La otra especie o manera de oración *affectiva* es la oración *affectiva* reposada, y así la llamo yo. Esta no es otra sino un reposo de la voluntad en las cosas divinas por algún *affecto*.”³² “La 3ª manera de la oración *affectiva* solo difiere de la 2ª en que es *suspensa*.”³³ For Cordeses the “*affectos*” he talks of in the aspirations are sorrow for or fear of sins, disciplining the bad habits in life and so on but, he does not propose the examination of conscience in order to reach perfection in this type, unlike in the intellectual prayer.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 81.

³⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

³¹ Ibid., p. 87.

³² Ibid., p. 91.

³³ Ibid., p. 93.

2.3 The *Vía purgativa* and the Examen

Cordeses points out that prayer is the most important instrument for perfection in life and this perfection is gradual. Those who are at the beginning of this perfection, according to Cordeses, are in the *vía purgativa*: “si de los que comiençan, este consiste en purgar y ampliar su anima de la suziedad de los pecados y vicios, y este se llama vía purgativa.” Those who profit from this and know more by being enlightened in understanding are said to be in the *vía illuminativa* and those who are transformed and united with God are in the *vía unitiva*. For Cordeses penance is a way of purifying while being in the *vía purgativa* and they require examination of conscience. “La vía purgativa no es otro sino insistir el hombre en aquellos ejercicios de oración mental y otros adherentes, que están endereçados a purgar y purificar su ánima y disponerla para la vía illuminativa y unitiva.”³⁴

Cordeses insists that those who want to follow the way of perfection have to purify themselves from the residues of sins. For him, even after confession there remain traces of sin in distinct ways like debt of temporal punishment, evil inclinations, sadness for past conduct along with doubt and fear of salvation and certain indisposition to be perfectly united with God.³⁵ These residues of sin can be purified by penance because by discipline and contrition the temporal debt is pardoned; with every act of compunction and shame an aversion to sin grow. Penance helps to cultivate virtues which in turn helps to check the evil inclinations; the discouragement caused in the soul is cast away by penance because from contrition the conscience is at peace, and in the words of Cordeses: “que por la penitencia continuada se desechan del ánima la tristeza de la mala vida passada y la desconfiança y el temor de la salvación consta de 3 razones: la 1^a es porque de la contrición nasce serenidad de la consciencia y alegría del corazon y esperança de la salvación, como cada uno experimenta en sí; y todas estas cosas son contrarias a la tristeza, desconfiança y temor.”³⁶

³⁴ Ibid., p. 105.

³⁵ “Deuda de pena temporal, malas inclinaciones, cierta tristeza de la vida passada y alguna desconfiança y temor de su salvación, cierta indisposición para ser perfectamente unido con Dios.” Ibid., p. 106.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 110.

Hence for Cordeses, the more one is away from sins and the more one purifies himself the more one is united with God. The way to do penance begins with great desire to purify oneself, confusion and compunction of heart, by meditating on one's own sins, and doing corporal disciplines. Examination of conscience forms part of such penitence that one has to do to be purified, for he says, "deve examinarse cada día sobre esta vida de si haze en ella lo que deve, o si procede con floxedad y remisión proponiendo la enmienda."³⁷ He further talks of three ways of purifying: by penance, mortification and love of God, and he warns that in mortification of such vices, the first, and the most difficult, is to recognize one's vices and evil inclinations. The reason for such difficulty is self-love that makes the person blind to his/her own inclinations. Cordeses proposes three means to know ones' inclinations and vices: first by prayer – either by asking God or by observation in the quietness of prayer; secondly by examining ones' mistakes; "el 2º medio es que examine cada día diligentemente sus faltas quotidianas, que en ellas las malas inclinaciones irá conociendo"³⁸ and thirdly by talking to another person.

2.4 Observations

Antonio Cordeses places the examen in the purgative way, in order to attain perfection in life. He sees the examen as a tool to purify oneself from the stain of sin in order to be united with God. We have seen that Cordeses proposes the examen as a tool in recognizing one's inclinations and vices, and here though he does not state it explicitly it is clear that he recommends the particular examen. For Cordeses penance, mortification, contrition, etc. are important and they are related to sins. Therefore, we can term the type of examen that Cordeses visualizes as moralistic. He proposes the examen at the beginning of spiritual growth, i.e. at the *vía purgativa*. According to him the affective prayer is the highest form of prayer where the will is moved and in such stage of prayer Cordeses does not talk of the need for an examen. Therefore, his examen is not necessarily one of discerning, it is at the purification stage and in our opinion, though it is presented within an upward movement in mystical horizons, it is a moralistic exercise.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 120.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 126.

3 Gil González Dávila and the *Pláticas*

Gil González Dávila, born in 1532 in Segovia, Spain, is one of the central figures in the establishment of the Society of Jesus in Spain. While entering the novitiate in 1551, González Dávila had already begun his theological studies after he had duly completed his studies from the Colegio trilingüe de Alcalá.³⁹ The first-hand experience with Jerónimo Nadal in the promulgation of the Constitutions in 1554 and the encounter with Francisco de Borja had left a deep impact on González Dávila. The exhortations of 1561 on the Institute as well as the subsequent journey with Nadal to Toledo gave González Dávila better knowledge into the heart of the spirituality of the Society of Jesus. His background studies in rhetoric and Greek stood him in great help while teaching philosophy at Cuenca (1556-1557) and later theology at Alcalá (1561). González Dávila had deep knowledge of the Society as he occupied many positions in it: Rector at Alcalá, Visitor to the provinces of Aragón and Castilla in 1567-1568, again of Castilla and Toledo in 1590, Provincial of Castilla for nearly ten years and later that of Andalucía, General Assistant of Spain under Mercurian, etc.⁴⁰ Such vast experience in the early years of the Society⁴¹ as well as his role in the preparation of the 1599 *Directorio*⁴² makes him stand out among his contemporaries as one who captured the heart of Ignatian spirituality early on. González Dávila is aptly described as “inteligente, rápido, prudente y espiritual, amigo del realismo sano, nada vaporoso ni abstracto, fue buen conocedor de la teología y de los Padres.”⁴³ González Dávila died in Madrid, in 1596.

³⁹ Cf. Manuel Ruiz Jurado, “González Dávila, Gil,” in *DHCJ* Vol. II, p. 1783.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*

⁴¹ As provincial and as General Assistant González Dávila intervened in matters regarding the style of prayer by Antonio Cordeses, Baltasar Álvarez, etc. More on this see McCoog, *The Mercurian Project*; de Guibert, *The Jesuits*, p. 224.

⁴² González Dávila headed the commission set up by general Aquaviva to revise the *Directorio* of 1591. With his competence, González Dávila indeed had an important role to play in the final version of the *Directorio* that was published in 1599, after many discussions. See Camilo María Abad, “Gil González Dávila S.I.: Sus pláticas sobre las reglas de la Compañía de Jesús,” in AA.VV., *Corrientes espirituales en la España del siglo XVI*, Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1963, pp. 363-391. Here pp. 376-378. This will be cited as “Gil González Dávila.” See also Guibert, *The Jesuits*, pp. 244-245.

⁴³ Ruiz Jurado, “González Dávila, Gil,” p. 1783.

3.1 *Las Pláticas* and the Examen

The *pláticas* are essentially spiritual – and not legislative – exhortations delivered between 1585-1588 in Andalusia where González Dávila was the provincial. These *pláticas* are comments on *Sumario de la Constituciones* and *Reglas Comunes*,⁴⁴ and explains the core of doctrines:

el Sumario que esas Platicas comentan, no es extracto de todas las *Constituciones*, sino solamente de aquellas *que tocan a la espiritual institución* de los hijos de la Compañía, como se dice su título. Es, pues, una obra esencialmente espiritual. La redacción se toma de las llamadas propiamente *Constituciones*, de sus *Declaraciones*, que tienen igual vigor jurídico que el texto, y también del titulado Examen, libro preliminar en que se propone lo más característico del nuevo Instituto, para el candidato vea está dispuesto a cumplirlo; y también para que la Compañía conozca al candidato antes de recibirle.⁴⁵

Further, González Dávila’s knowledge of the Society of Jesus is unique and Camilo M.^a Abad describes him as “ingenio naturalmente curioso y enamorado del Instituto de la Compañía, en todas estas ocasiones Gil González procuró conocer cuanto con el Instituto se relacionaba.”⁴⁶ The exhortations of a man with such a profound knowledge of the Society of Jesus indeed reflect in many ways the very ideas Ignatius visualized and therefore significant for our study. Since the aim of these exhortations were “no precisamente, declarar la letra, sino el espíritu en ellas encerrado, que es el espíritu propio de la Compañía,”⁴⁷ what they talk of the examen is indeed according to the spirit of the Society. In the words of González Dávila, the exhortations were meant to “poner delante los ojos cual es el camino por donde habemos de ir al fin propio de nuestra vocación; cual es el espíritu que a esta Compañía da vida y movimiento; donde se ha de buscar, que son estas Reglas donde está encerrado que se desenvuelva y descubra, y toque con las manos.

⁴⁴ These were the editions prepared by Mercurian in 1580. See the words of Camilo Abad in the introduction of Gil González Dávila, *Pláticas sobre las Reglas de la Compañía de Jesús*, Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1964, p. 26.

⁴⁵ Abad, “Gil González Dávila,” p. 366.

⁴⁶ The *Sumario* was prepared by Nadal in Spanish for the promulgation and was in circulation in manuscript till 1560. “Ese Sumario fue el que circuló manuscrito en castellano hasta 1560, en que, traducido al latín, se editó en Roma, por diligencia del mismo Padre Nadal; y, con ligerísimas variantes, ese fue el Sumario que siguió en vigor hasta la nueva redacción latina hecha en tiempo del P. Mercuriano e impresa en 1580, no sin intervención directa, según creemos, del mismo Gil González Dávila.” Abad, “Gil González Dávila,” p. 365.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 368. González Dávila was among the first Jesuits who held the view that the Exercises occupies the central role in training Jesuits. More on this see Guibert, *The Jesuits*, p. 527.

No es razón que cosa tan necesaria esté oscura y encubierta tanto, que sea menester mucho trabajo para encontrarla.”⁴⁸

González Dávila deals with the practice of the examen in *Plática* 28 and 29, and he believed that all the *Reglas* are part of the Society’s plan for the practice of perfection.⁴⁹ In all his exhortations he reiterated that what characterizes the spirituality of Ignatius is the spirit of abnegation and mortification,⁵⁰ and he considered the third degree of humility as the summit of such spirituality.⁵¹ And therefore, it would be proper to see what he says on prayer and the practice of the examen from such a perspective.

3.1.1 The Daily Examen⁵²

González Dávila considers the examen as a means to purify oneself and to make great spiritual profit. According to him, this is not because spiritual masters and saints used the examen as a means of perfection but even philosophers practiced it, and Ignatius used this means at times much more than prayer. “Y nuestro Padre Ignacio hizo casi más caso del examen que de la oración; y así sabemos que a sus compañeros los entretuvo mucho con los exámenes y frecuencia de sacramentos; y en las Reglas primeras que vinieron por acá, no hacían mención de otro medio que el del examen general en los Ejercicios, y

⁴⁸ González Dávila, *Pláticas*, p. 221 (*Plática* #16).

⁴⁹ According to González Dávila the Society has two-fold purpose: the greater glory of God and humiliation of oneself. “toda ciencia tiene sus principios indemostrables, que no los mete en probación ni averiguación, sino que los supone por cosa cierta y llana [...]. Es, pues, el primer principio bueno y verdadero, universalísimo, y, si así se puede decir, formalísimo, al cual se reducen todas nuestras constituciones y reglas, y el cual hemos de dar por razón de todo cuanto se dijere en ellas, y en el cual habemos de apoyar todas las dificultades que se ofrecieren: este principio es el buscar la mayor gloria y honra de Dios y el mejor servicio divino, [...] porque el fin de la religión es adelantarse más en el servicio de Dios Nuestro Señor y buscar la perfección, que consiste en la fineza del amor de Dios y de la caridad [...]. El segundo principio es la mayor humillación nuestra o desprecio, como lo quisiéredes llamar: éste es el fundamento sobre el que se ha de fundar este edificio que llega hasta la vida eterna y hasta el mismo Dios, como dice San Agustín. *Et Christus: Qui vult venire post me, abnegat*, etc. González Dávila, *Pláticas*, pp. 102-103.

⁵⁰ See especially *plática* 16 where he explains the *reglas* 9, and 10. See *ibid.* pp. 222ff.

⁵¹ “Acerca de esto pone N. P. una doctrina de los tres grados de humildad, que es la mejor a mi parecer que él enseñó: y la pone por fundamento de las elecciones: que, ofreciéndose dos cosas de igual gloria de Dios, tengo de escoger aquella que tuviere más dificultad y más desprecio mío, para actualmente imitar a Nuestro Señor, como lo pide el estado religioso; porque en esto hay menos de interés y no tiene el hombre tanta ocasión de buscar su particular.” González Dávila, *Pláticas*, p. 105.

⁵² González Dávila terms the *plática* 28 as “Del examen general” but states clearly that it is different from general examen which would be for making confessions. Keeping this in mind we term it as Daily Examen, in order not to confuse the terminology.

confesiones y comuniones, pareciéndole que, si esto se hacía bien, bastaba para ejercicios de perfección.”⁵³

For González Dávila, the examen is primarily a means to purify oneself, more than as a help in confessing:

el primer fin a que se endereza es a la purificación del alma, aunque también ayuda para la confesión. Es el hombre de la Compañía cirujano que anda siempre con medicinas en la mano, curando llagas; ha menester tener tiente para conocer dónde está la llaga y hasta dónde llega, y esto es el examen. No es dificultoso, ver la importancia del examen; porque examinar sus obras es propio del hombre que usa de razón y tiene dominio de sus obras por la libertad, y así tiene tribunal y mero y mixto imperio; es juez de sus obras, y no puede dar sentencia sin conocer la causa. Pues, para conocerla es menester examinar su corazón, ser guardián de su alma, ser casero y saber lo que pasa dentro de sí.⁵⁴

Pointing out the importance of keeping one’s heart from sins, González Dávila talks of examining well:

guarda la metáfora de la vida corporal, la cual procede del corazón, de donde salen los espíritus vitales y se comunican por las arterias y pulsos; por lo cual por ellos se conoce su disposición del hombre; y por conservar cosa de tanta importancia, allí se pone todo el cuidado, si se teme que la enfermedad es ponzoñosa, porque no llegue la ponzoña al corazón; allí son las pítimas y preservativos. De la misma manera, dice el Espíritu Santo: *Vela sobre tu corazón con todo cuidado y diligencia, porque de ahí depende la vida*, de ahí depende el concierto de todo lo demás. Cuando el corazón está bien concertado y bien gobernado, de ahí sale la vida bien concertada y bien gobernada. Del corazón salen los espíritus vitales que dan vida y espíritu a nuestras obras. Y al contrario, del corazón mal gobernado y desconcertado salen todos los pecados.⁵⁵

For González Dávila, then, the examen is a way to order the entire life by distinguishing good from evil. He made use of various imageries to propose the importance of this practice. We summarize here what he considers important in examining oneself, highlighting the various aspects of this practice of perfection.

⁵³ González Dávila, *Pláticas*, p. 372.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 372-373.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

3.1.1.1 Knowing Oneself

González Dávila argues in favour of the examen saying most of Christian teaching is based on the rule of ‘knowing to examine:’

y realmente, Padres y Hermanos, gran parte es de la filosofía cristiana el saber examinarse. Mucho sabe quien se sabe conocer; y esta ciencia ¿por dónde se saca, sino por los exámenes? Allá decís, y decís una gran verdad, que el conocimiento de la sustancia de la cosa se alcanza por sus obras. Por ellas conocéis las facultades y potencias que en ella hay, y así venís a rastrear la naturaleza y sustancia que no podéis ver; por lo cual quien conoce estos efectos y facultades decís que tiene ciencia de aquella cosa. Así vos: examinad y conoced vuestras obras interiores, y de esa manera conoceréis lo que sois, y tendréis ciencia de vos, que de otra manera no la podréis tener.⁵⁶

The examen helps to know oneself, points out González Dávila, but should go beyond: “no es idóneo para conocer a Dios el que a sí mismo no se conoce. En nosotros, habemos de conocer a Él y a sus atributos: su bondad y su misericordia y justicia. Éste es el libro mejor que podemos tener para alcanzar esta ciencia.” The one who knows himself thus can know others as well as help them to know themselves. Further, just as St. Benedict teaches, one who knows to cure himself knows to help others with the same: “quien se sabe curar a sí, sabe curar de la misma manera a los demás, porque todos tenemos las mismas inclinaciones, cuál más, cuál menos, que todos sabemos a la pega: lo que me aprovecha a mí esto aprovechará al otro: es la maestría en gobernar las almas que a nosotros nos es tan necesaria.”⁵⁷

Basing himself of the teachings of St. Augustine, González Dávila says it is important to know oneself and the examen is the best means for it. It is important to bring to light what is hidden in the heart so that one can correct it.⁵⁸ Thinking in line with St. Bernard, González Dávila believed that using one’s capacity one can evaluate oneself; and if the day was organized well one can easily find out the mistakes.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 376.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 377.

⁵⁸ “San Agustín dice: No hay mejor cosa que pensar en sí mismo ‘se ipsum discernere, se ipsum discutere, se ipsum discere, se ipsum quaerere, se ipsunt invenire:’ Y ¿puede haber más ‘se ipsum?’ Esto, pues, es examinarse el hombre, ver lo que hay en su corazón, sacarlo a la luz, examinando a Jerusalén con candelas, no a oscuras, no en tinieblas: no encubrir las, sino sacarlas a plaza para que sean remediadas.” Ibid., p. 375.

3.1.1.2 Healing the Soul

In the same line, González Dávila argues that the examen can help in a practical knowledge; like a doctor who feels the pulse or looks at the face to determine the state of a patient, one who has experience can help determine what ails the soul.

Hay algunos médicos que con sólo tomar el pulso, o mirar el rostro, o de otro cualquier accidente, dicen luego: esta enfermedad tiene. Son buenos médicos y prácticos. Así, el hombre espiritual, hombre interior, de sólo ver (el) mirar con los ojos, de oír el hablar, le penetra su corazón e inclinaciones y hace anatomía de todo. Pues esta dignísima ciencia se alcanza por el examen; dignísima por el sujeto y dignísima por sus efectos.⁵⁹

González Dávila further compares the examen with a doctor who knows where and how to apply balm to heal infirmity: “demás de esto, hay algunas medicinas que los médicos llaman locales; y para que hagan provecho, se han de aplicar en tal parte y no en otra. Y saber discernir estos lugares es parte muy principal del arte. Pues así, hay medicinas espirituales que se han de aplicar en tal parte, donde está la llaga, y no en otra; y el acertar esto es acertar la cura. Pues esta ciencia viene a alcanzar el hombre por el ejercicio de examinarse y conocerse.”⁶⁰

González Dávila also points out that through the practice of examen, one gains such a knowledge like the physicians, that one knows to identify the area where healings is necessary. And he points out: “el título que tiene de examen en los Ejercicios es Examen general *ad purgationem animae et ad peccatorum confessionem utilissimum*. El primer fin a que se endereza es a la purificación del alma, aunque también ayuda para la confesión. Es el hombre de la Compañía cirujano que anda siempre con medicinas en la mano, curando llagas; ha menester tener tiento para conocer dónde está la llaga y hasta dónde llega, y esto es el examen.”⁶¹ By comparing the practice of the examen with a physician González Dávila also underlines the importance of growing in self-knowledge through the examen. For he says, “ha puesto Dios Nuestro Señor grande trabazón entre estos tres medios: que la oración da fuerza a la mortificación y la hace suave, y el examen pone delante a la

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 377.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 372.

mortificación su objeto, descubriéndole las necesidades y enfermedades y en particular al médico para que las cure; porque sin saberse la enfermedad no puede curarse.”⁶²

3.1.1.3 Some Practical Aspects

One of the first practical aspects of the examen that González Dávila points out is the specificity in examining. “Hace el examen que no andéis por universalidades; descúbreos nuevas conquistas, nuevas tierras y peleas, nuevos modos con que mortificaros y servir a Nuestro Señor.” Along with choosing specific areas for examining González Dávila also proposes gradualism in the actual practice of the examen to make much profit.

Enséñanos también el modo con que debemos mortificarnos. Si tornase un cantero una piedra que quiere labrar, para hacer un sillar que parezca bien en un edificio, y quisiese labrarla dando recios golpes con el almádena, quebraríala y no sería de provecho. Diríaisle: tomad un pico e id poco a poco quitándole la fealdad, y de esta manera alcanzaréis lo que pretendéis. Pues así digo yo: Tenéis una pasión de demasiada vergüenza y empacho: no deis con el almádena, que la destruiréis del todo y perderéis una joya muy importante para vuestro estado; mortificarla poco a poco, quitando la demasía, “Soy demasiado curioso;” quitad poco a poco la demasía y dejad la curiosidad, que es buena para quien trata letras; que sin ella no se hace nada.⁶³

By using such an imagery of a stone-cutter, González Dávila underlines the importance of dealing with imperfections one by one; the desired perfection is to be cultivated by chiselling away specific imperfections.

In González Dávila’s opinion, the continual practice of the examen promotes discernment of spirits and he gives the arguments:

de esta manera, mediante el examen se alcanza la discreción de espíritus que los santos dicen, con que el hombre ve lo que es bueno, lo que es malo, lo que es falta, lo que es sobra; y así hace aquella anatomía que dice San Pablo, que allega hasta hacer división entre la carne y el espíritu, y se entra en los entresijos, venas y arterias, y distingue los más mínimos pensamientos e intenciones del corazón. Esto es ser hombre racional, que examina sus obras; esto es ser hombre interior y espiritual, ser casero de sí mismo. De esta manera va caminando adelante; cada día va descubriendo más tierra, y con la novedad cobra bríos y alientos para conquistar las nuevas tierras o empresas que Dios le va poniendo delante.⁶⁴

⁶² Ibid., p. 379.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 379.

Often, not knowing what to examine is an excuse for not practicing it; but the gradual and repeated practice of examining helps discover new areas of life.⁶⁵ He thinks that in this way one discovers different aspects of lives where change is needed.

Continuing with the practical aspects González Dávila cites the very practice of this exercise as practical: that is to say, there is no better way to learn to examen than by examining: “para hacer bien el examen, no hay mejor disposición que el examen, como para la oración dijimos que no había mejor preparación que la oración. Si no halláis faltas cuando os vais a examinar, sino de esas cosas comunes y muy gruesas que andan arrastrando por casa, la causa es porque entre día no os examináis ni dais siquiera una ojeada a vuestro corazón.”⁶⁶ Along with such frequent examen⁶⁷ González Dávila proposes another means to profit from such practice: confiding in the superior or ones’ confessor.⁶⁸ González Dávila is of the opinion that one should not spend time only looking for faults, but dedicate time to have a deeper knowledge.

¿Habemos de gastar todo aquel cuarto en buscar las faltas? -Yo os diré mi parecer. No querría que fuédeses en el examen tan metafísico como en los estudios, que levantáis las cosas a una abstracción que se os van de vista, y cuando pensáis que tenéis algo, no tenéis nada. El hombre no está obligado sino a lo que siente en el corazón que es falta, tenerla por tal y manifestarla. No es menester gastar mucho tiempo: “si pensé, no pensé; si consentí, no consentí”; que eso más destruye la devoción que la pone. Concluid con eso presto; porque el rato del examen, si se hace bien, es el mejor bocado y más casero modo de oración que tenemos.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ “Creedme, que el estaros vos mano sobre mano, sin saber en qué ocuparos ni en qué os habéis de mortificar, hecho un hombre estantío que lo mismo de antaño eso tiene hogaño, que eso nace de no conoceros y examinaros. ¿No habéis visto a un hombre que nunca ha salido de Córdoba, no ha visto otras tierras, enseñado a ver siempre este sitio, unos mismos hombres, unas mismas calles? Así somos nosotros: ya tenemos nuestros lugares comunes, nunca salimos de ellos; no habemos visto otras faltas que hay en nosotros, allá en lo hondo del corazón, las cuales nos alentarían a trabajar y despertarían de nuestra tibieza. De aquí vemos aquella humildad de los Santos que cada día decían: ‘Hoy comienzo;’ porque cada día les iba Dios descubriendo nueva tierra: Heme encontrado un escondrijo, un bolsillo que no había visto. – ¿Ahí estábades vos? – Esto me pone un gran coraje para comenzar de nuevo.” *Ibid.*, p. 380.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 380.

⁶⁷ With regard to the frequency of the examen, González Dávila cites the example of Bonaventure who examined seven times a day and St. Ignatius practicing it every hour of the day.

⁶⁸ “Demás de esto, yo os quiero dar un buen consejo, que, si vos no os conocéis, acudáis a vuestro superior o confesor, que os digan lo que saben de vos: o (a) otro hermano igual, que os lo diga amigablemente. Que no sois como la lamia que dicen que ve mucho fuera de casa y, en entrando en ella, no ve nada. Vos, fuera de vos veis mucho, y a vos todos os conocen. Sólo vos no os conocéis, ni hacéis otra cosa que excusaros.” *Ibid.*, p. 381.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

González Dávila considers the examen as a moment of intimate prayer since it includes thanksgiving, asking for petition, etc. For, he says of the examen: “en él hay hacimiento de gracias, y no sólo de los antiguos y comunes beneficios, sino de los de hoy que el hombre guarda dentro de sí, experimenta el consuelo que Dios me dio; la sofrenada que me dio como a un caballo que se va a precipitar: cuando me castiga y reprende mis faltas; cuando me previno para que no cayese, con todas las demás mociones, inspiraciones interiores. Aquí pide perdón de sus faltas, confúndese y avergüenzase.”⁷⁰

González Dávila is convinced that the effectiveness of this prayer consists in the fact that one repents and asks pardon for all the instances where one failed, in spite of the many promises. Such recognition and acceptance of the faults also produce virtues like humility and confusion. He believes that in and through the practice of the examen one realizes his/her true image: “no sólo conocéis en el examen quién sois, sino también quién fuérades, si Dios no os hubiera librado.” Through this affirmation González Dávila underlines the importance of, not merely one’s efforts, but the of grace in such prayer.⁷¹

Among the practical aspects that he points out González Dávila emphasizes the fact that it is not enough to examine and recognize the faults, but one has to find out the real cause and then take steps to correct them. For him, it is important to identify the most frequent fault and is equally necessary, later on, to keep away from occasions that would lead to such sins. He recommends,

veo una falta más frecuente en mí: busco la causa para remediarla; ahí aplico la oración, examen y mortificación. Pero advertid una cosa: que no haréis nada, si no quitáis la ocasión. Si yo veo que de hablar con tal y tal persona se sigue disminución de espíritu; si por acordarme de mi tierra, siento flaqueza en mi vocación; si yo veo que por dejarme llevar de pensamientos ociosos, me vienen deshonestos. Quitad la ocasión; porque si ésta no quitáis, nunca os veréis libre de esa falta.⁷²

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ “Cuando echáis de ver la guerra que os hacen estos mosquitos, y os acordáis de los gigantazos de quien Dios os libró, y que volviérades otra vez a caer en sus manos si Dios no os tuviera de la suya, y que viniérades a ser un desuellacaras. Y así está el hombre con grandísima humildad, pendiente de Él como de un hilito, y temblando de enojarle, porque no lo suelte. Ahí también echáis de ver la repugnancia que tuvisteis a la dificultad que se os ofreció, como bestia lerda y espantadiza; juráisosla: ¿Eres lerdo?, pues yo te apretaré la espuela y te la hincaré un jeme, hasta que te haga saltar el barranco.” Ibid, p. 382.

⁷² Ibid.

While affirming that it is important to confess one's sins, González Dávila points out that in the examen one should look at the source of sins, else such exercise would be superficial. And, a good examen will lead to purification of soul and a true amendment.

3.1.2 The Particular Examen

González Dávila held the particular examen in high esteem, terming it as a singular favour (*singular merced*) bestowed by the Lord on the Society of Jesus in order that all may reach greater perfection. The general examen is found in other traditions, but the particular examen, especially with the detailed division of steps, is unique to the Society of Jesus, and everybody could profit from this exercise. He narrates,

ha sido dado a la Compañía por singular merced de Nuestro Señor el examen particular, para pureza de sus hijos y para criar operarios inconfundibles y sin reprehensión y tacha, como dice San Pablo; libres, no solamente de las manchas de los pecados que del mundo trajimos, sino también de nuestras condiciones particulares y naturales. Si echamos de ver, todos los demás medios que usa la Compañía, son comunes a otras religiones y escuelas de virtud que hay en la Iglesia. Oración, muchas religiones hay que tratan de ella. Examen general, también. Pero examen particular no le hallamos, como aquí se trata, en ninguna otra, ni aun en los libros. Rastro, sí, y fundamento de examen particular; pero la puntualidad con que la Compañía lo enseña, en ninguna manera.⁷³

Since everybody has some drawback, or some venom that keeps weakening the person from inside,⁷⁴ all are in need of the particular examen.

González Dávila is very clear that this examen is meant for specific vice and there are three times for doing such an examen. Unlike the general examen, here one has to be faithful to the rules like the lines and the comparison, the resolution, etc. which points to the amount of difficulty involved in it.⁷⁵ He reminds that not all succeed in doing this

⁷³ Ibid., p. 383.

⁷⁴ “El examen particular es para todos cuantos hay en el mundo. Todos tenemos necesidad de él; ninguno se excusa; porque cada uno tiene su desagadero; a todos cupo la ponzoña de la serpiente y de la levadura de Adán: *Iugum grave super filios Adam, a die exitus de ventre matris eorum.* (Eclesiástico, 40.) No hay condición, por muy buena que sea, que no tenga su sobrehueso y algún vicio particular que le haga guerra.” Ibid., p. 384.

⁷⁵ “El general es para todas faltas y para todos los vicios; todo lo abarca. El particular no; no abarca tanto; es sólo contra un particular vicio. El particular tiene tres tiempos. Luego en despertando, proponer la enmienda de aquella falta particular; a mediodía, tomarse cuenta de las veces que ha sido vencido; y a la noche, otra vez. El general no tiene eso. El examen particular tiene otras reglas para hacerse bien; tiene sus líneas donde se apunten las faltas; pide que se compare medio día con medio día, día con día, semana

practice well to get profit out of it, however persons of all type can get much out of it.⁷⁶ In each person, there is a king-vice that needs to be identified and once it is corrected many of the other vices connected with it also disappears – which would be like neutralising the captain of the army to paralyze the entire troop. “Y por experiencia lo vemos, que siempre en los hombres hay un vicio rey que se lleva tras sí a todos los demás [...]. Desjarretad ese vicio, que todos los demás luego caerán; cortad la cabeza a Goliat, el fortísimo de los filisteos, que luego toda la gente menuda huirá, porque en él tiene su confianza y él les hacía espaldas. Cortad la cabeza a ese vicio rey, que luego todos los demás quedarán desjarretados.”⁷⁷

Citing the long tradition, González Dávila points out the efficiency of targeting the strongest vice and doing it one by one – never collectively:

con la gracia de Dios (como dice él luego), junta con nuestra industria, cuidado y diligencia, no hay que temer dice, el que ocupándose contra un vicio y poniendo allí todo su cuidado, los demás le hagan grande daño; porque este solo cuidado que contra este vicio tiene, causará un horror muy grande de todo pecado; grande cuidado en huirlos todos por la trabazón que tienen entre sí todos los vicios. Y no solamente es tan eficaz este modo de pelear contra un vicio solo, porque, vencido el más principal, todos los demás desfallecen, sino también porque la razón misma enseña que más fácilmente se alcanza victoria peleando contra los enemigos uno a uno que contra todos juntos. Y la experiencia también nos lo enseña; porque, como dice el refrán, “Ni Hércules contra dos.”⁷⁸

con semana. ¿Qué es todo eso? Mostramos el cuidado y atención que el examen particular pide para hacerse bien hecho; y de aquí es la dificultad grande de este negocio, y una falta que tenemos ordinariamente; que de 30 que hagan examen particular los 29 no lo hacen con la exacción y puntualidad con que nuestro Padre nos lo enseña.” Ibid.

⁷⁶ González Dávila points out that everybody, irrespective of the stage of spiritual growth they are in, profits from it: one who does not feel so much the tension of fight of the passion may tend to be tepid; one who is righteous may lack kindness; one who is always well recollected may tend to be melancholic, etc. See *ibid.*, p. 385.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* He cites the teaching of Cassian to support what Ignatius recommended and says that one should take up the strongest vice as subject matter of the examen. “Ésta, pues, es la doctrina de nuestro Padre: que tome cada uno empresa de hacer guerra más particular al vicio que en él es más poderoso. La misma doctrina pone Casiano, coll. 5, c. 14 (que es maravilloso todo él y digno que todos lo veamos), hablando de los 8 vicios principales (que tantos contaban los griegos, aunque los latinos de tiempos antiguos cuentan solamente 7). Dice, pues, que, para salir con victoria de estos vicios, no debes pelear contra todos juntos.” *Ibid.*, p. 386.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 387.

And, taken individually there is greater chance of overpowering a vice. The practice of such examen is not to go on for life, the secret is in exercising it diligently every day.⁷⁹ González Dávila emphasises the need to address the most powerful vice, but doing it within shorter time periods so that the effect is not lost. The shorter time-periods permits also greater shame and confusion for falling victims to such vices,⁸⁰ which in turn would help in firm resolution and correction.

González Dávila is of the opinion that focusing on some particular aspect is important in the practice of the particular examen and this would bring the change; dealing with vices in general would not bring much fruit.⁸¹ Further, the central aspect of such an examen should be vices and focusing on some virtues instead may not be helpful to make progress. He believes that in order to cultivate something good the opposing structures should be cleared first and then there would be good disposition.⁸² González Dávila insists

⁷⁹ “Pues esta necesidad nos ha puesto en obligación de hacer con cuidado el examen particular; porque no quiere Nuestro Señor Dios darnos la victoria de nuestros enemigos juntamente, sino de uno a uno. Mas no solamente el examen particular es para tener particular cuidado contra un vicio, pero también nos enseña nuestro Padre modo y traza con que la pelea se nos haga más fácil, tomando un mismo vicio en veces.” Ibid.

⁸⁰ “Pues para esto nos enseña tomar esta pelea a trechos, como un enfermo que quiere tomar una purga, y va poco a poco tragando, y así viene a tomarla toda. De la misma manera proponéis no enojaros, no por toda la vida; sino, por la mañana, cuando os levantáis, proponéis hasta mediodía: desde las cinco hasta las once son seis horas; pues en seis horas ¿no podré yo reprimirme? Luego, al tiempo del examen, propongo hasta la noche: ocho horas. Quien se ha reprimido seis horas, ¿no podrá ocho? De esta manera se va el hombre engañando su imaginativa, no tomándolo en junto, sino por trechos; y de esta manera se confunde más y avergüenza más de las faltas que hace, pues en tan poco trecho no pudo cumplir su propósito.” Ibid., p. 388. He also gives the example of a traveller who wants to cover long distance when the planning should be for shorter periods, may be for a day. Then, covering the distance little by little great progress would be made. See also pp. 390-391.

⁸¹ “Descended a algo particular: «*Hic et nunc*»; que eso dice la Filosofía moral; porque *sermones universales* en esta materia *minus utiles sunt*; y tan universales pueden ser, que nada valgan. Y nuestro Filósofo lo dijo en la *Metafísica*, que el médico no cura al hombre, sino a Calias o Sócrates. Y este descender en particular se hace por el examen particular; por lo cual, el no sanar de nuestras llagas sino estarnos toda la vida con las mismas, no es culpa de la medicina, sino de la poca aplicación y uso de ella. *Super contritione filiae populi mei contritus sum et contristatus; stupor obtinuit me* (dice Jeremías, cap. 8): *¿numquid non est resina in Galaad? Ant medicus non est ibi? Quare igitur non est obducta cicatrix filiae populi mei?* No hay falta de resina, sino falta de aplicación; y ésta es la causa de estarse el hombre lleno de sus faltas, tan soberbio hoy como el primer día, tan respondón, tan colérico; que, si de esta medicina nos aprovechásemos, sin duda se vería grandísima enmienda. Y así, para mí no hay mayor argumento de la importancia del examen particular, que la guerra que el demonio le hace, los impedimentos que pone; como quien tiene entendido lo mucho que en ello nos va.” Ibid., p. 391.

⁸² “Hay algunos, que si los preguntáis: de qué hacéis examen, dirán: Padre, yo de la presencia de Dios, de la humildad, etc...- Hermano mío, no os subáis tanto; mirad los vicios que hay en vos, que ésa es buena materia de examen.- Diréisme: Padre, lo mismo se es hacer examen de la humildad, o de la soberbia; que quien hace actos de una virtud, juntamente hace guerra al vicio contrario.- Hermano, ¿no sabéis filosofía?,

much on the importance of going down to the particularities of the matter and taking note of concrete instances of failures. Pointing out the pitfalls in the practice of this exercise, González Dávila talks of the following abuses:

1. Abstraction: choosing a vice and then examining it in general without going down into specific moments. He terms it as “otros que andan en unas metafísicas y levantan las cosas a unas abstracciones, unas cosas allá interiores y espirituales, que para sólo advertirlas es menester mucho. [...] y os subís a cosas tan altas y a unas anagogías que no las entenderán; que verdaderamente traer examen de eso es soberbia; [...] Los que comienzan, primero han de dar tras los vicios corporales que llaman los santos, que son los que más se echan de ver y son más fáciles de vencer -esa tristeza, esa enviduela, esa gula.”⁸³
2. Generalisation: in dealing with one particular vice it is not enough to look at them generally, instead one has to analyse thoughts, words, deeds, and so on. González Dávila believes that dealing with a vice in all its aspect is difficult, whereas focusing on various aspects make it more effective.⁸⁴
3. Superficial instances: the subject matter of the examen may be a specific vice, but one examines superficially and identifies easier and less significant moments.⁸⁵
4. Non-persistent: choosing everyday different areas to examine does not bring any fruit.

¿no sabéis que para introducir la forma, han de preceder las disposiciones y habéis de echar fuera la forma contraria? Echad mano de la envidia, de la soberbia.” Ibid., p. 392.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 393.

⁸⁴ “Que si lo tomáis así en conjunto, la soberbia es una cosa muy basta. No podréis desbastaarla así en junto. ¿No habéis oído lo que decía el otro, que la cola del caballo toda junta no se podía arrancar, sino cerda a cerda, sí, y fácilmente. También el hacecillo de varas, si queréis quebrarlo o doblarlo todo junto, no podéis; pero tomad las varas una a una, y haréis lo que quisiéredes de ellas. Así, pues, digo: la soberbia puede ser en pensamientos, palabras y obras. Pues ese examen de soberbia traedlo más ceñido. Poned examen primero de no decir palabras de soberbia, no alabaros, etc.; y así, poco a poco, hoy una vara, mañana otra, las quebraréis todas. *Solve fasciculos deprimentes*. Desatad esos hacecillos; cortando un esparto y otro, vendréis a quebrar toda la sogá del pecado, que así se llama: *funes peccatorum*.” Ibid., pp. 393-394.

⁸⁵ “Hay algunos que traen examen de vicios, y en particular, y con cuidado; pero ¿de qué? De lo que menos hace al caso: no hay llegar a cosa que duela, ni cosa de momento [...]. Así éstos: al vicio rey, ése no hay tocarle; andan en brujerías; toman lo de menos momento.” Ibid., p. 394.

Thus, González Dávila emphasises the importance of persevering in the examen, of specific and most necessary vice, day after day until that is won over with the grace of God.

Among the practical aspects of doing the particular examen, González Dávila prescribes placing oneself in front of the Lord – just like in the general examen that we have seen – confiding in the superior and confessor, and so on.

Entrad dentro de vos; poneos delante Nuestro Señor; mirad todas vuestras faltas; escoged la que os parece más principal para de ella traer examen. Mirad vuestro desaguadero, que sin duda lo tenéis; mirad qué es lo que más os aparta de Nuestro Señor y os impide vuestro aprovechamiento. Mirad eso que tenéis allá reservado; y, si no os conocéis, acudid a quien os conozca, que no faltará quien os conozca interior y exteriormente, y os diga vuestras faltas sin que se lo paguéis. Acudid a vuestro Superior o al confesor, para que en esto os den luz.⁸⁶

With regard to recalling the subject matter at rising, González Dávila thinks that it is better to do it placing oneself at the foot of the Lord. While asking for grace to carry out the activities of the day, one can also pray for doing the examen faithfully. Confessing ones' sins, even when they are not grave in nature, could also be a help in feeling shame; this practice also gives opportunities to profit from the graces of the sacrament of reconciliation.⁸⁷

3.2 Observations

The *pláticas* of González Dávila underline the role of the examen in purifying the soul more than that of making good confession. As spiritual exhortations, they have the objective of imparting the core spirituality of the Society of Jesus and at the same time deepening the sense of religious life. As means of perfection and purification, the examen is placed at the centre of one's spiritual life, where he hoped that the Jesuits would grow in abnegation. As we have seen, González Dávila gives importance to knowing oneself as

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 395.

⁸⁷ It is interesting to note that González Dávila talks of combining prayer and confession with this exercise, thus underlining the importance of God's grace in dealing with vices. "Hecho todo esto, si vencieres, da gracias a Dios, que suyo es el caudal, aunque la industria sea tuya, como dijimos arriba. «*Dabit eos Dominus in conspectu tuo, et interficiet illos, donec penitus deleantur*. A Él se atribuye la victoria. A Él se han de dar las gracias." Ibid., pp. 395-396. See also the First Way of Praying *Sp. Ex.* [238ff.]

well as knowing God in and through such practice. He often tends to compare the examen with medicine, underlining the healing aspect more than the moralistic nature. The focus on purity, knowing oneself, healing, etc. do not project a moralistic approach. On the other hand, as we have seen, González Dávila thinks that a continual practice of the examen promotes discernment of spirits; the practice of distinguishing good from evil in one's thoughts, deep in one's heart help discover newer things. Thus, it would not be wrong to say that González Dávila inclines more towards the spiritual discerning aspect of the examen.

4 Peter Canisius and the *Catechism*

Peter Canisius was born on 8 May, 1521 in Nimega in Holland. His vocation is connected with his great-aunt, Reynalda van Eymeren, a nun in the convent of St. Agnes of Arnhem who introduced him to the riches of Flemish and German medieval mysticism and this had a remarkable influence in his life. Canisius made the Spiritual Exercises under Peter Faber in April 1543.⁸⁸ He entered the Society of Jesus on 8 May 1543 in Mainz, Germany and was ordained a priest in June of 1546. Canisius pronounced his solemn vows in Rome on 4 September, 1549,⁸⁹ after the completion of doctoral studies in theology, and then was sent to Messina to start a school there. He worked as the dean, rector and vice-chancellor of university of Ingolstadt from 1549 to 1552; then in Vienna he was engaged in great preaching at churches, hospitals, prisons and in rural areas from 1552 to 1554. He was also the administrator of the diocese of Vienna for a short while. Canisius was made the first provincial of Upper Germany, which he held from 1556 to 1569 when he started many schools in Germany, attended the Worms council, diet of Augsburg, and was the Papal theologian at the Council of Trent.⁹⁰ As the fruit of much labour Canisius published the catechism: first *Summa doctrinae christinae* in 1555 for students who knew Latin and could follow simple arguments, second *Summa doctrinae christinae per questionae tradita et ad captum rudiorum accomodata* in 1556 for children, third *Catechismus minor seu parvus catechismus Catholicorum* in 1558 for adults. And the popularity of his work can

⁸⁸ Cf. *Canisii* vol. I, p. xxxviii.

⁸⁹ Cf. Paul Begheyne, "Canisius (Kanis), Pedro," in *DHCJ* vol. I, pp. 633-635, here 633.

⁹⁰ See "Pedro Canisio," in GEI, *Escritos esenciales*, pp. 732-765.

be gauged from the fact that these were edited 200 times in his lifetime.⁹¹ In 1580 Canisius went to Freiburg, Switzerland, started a school and was involved in preaching and writing where he died on 21 December 1597. Other than presenting the Catechism in simple 211 question-answers Canisius is also known for his contribution to theology based on the teaching of the Fathers of the Church.⁹²

4.1 The Examen in the Autobiography and Other Personal Writings

The autobiography and other personal writings open a window to the interior of the soul of Canisius, to his great spiritual depth. They reveal the role of deep prayer as the secret behind the great fruit that this apostle of Germany bore in teaching true Catholic doctrine. In Canisius' life prayer was intimately linked to the way he lived his vocation in the Society of Jesus, and his only concern, as he says: “mi única y principal preocupación empezó a ser el seguimiento de Cristo, el Señor, que me había mirado misericordiosamente, tal como él, pobre, casto y obediente, me había precedido en el camino de la cruz.”⁹³ In this very journey of following Christ, the examen played a great role and we look at it in the following sections.

4.1.1 In His Vocation

Right from the time when Canisius came in contact with the Jesuits and learned the ways of praying according to the *Exercises*, the examen became a part of his life. Canisius reveals the crucial role played by the daily examen in order to grow in self-knowledge, in identifying his defects as well as growing in perfection in religious life, right from the moment he made the Spiritual Exercises under Peter Faber, in April of 1543:

mientras hacía esta experiencia y examinaba en profundidad mi conciencia, aprendí a orar a Dios *en espíritu y en verdad* y comprendí que el Instituto de la llamada Compañía, que ya conocía entonces suficientemente, me resultaría muy a propósito para vivir santa y felizmente y para servir a Dios. Por esto, al oír la clara voz de Dios como si estuviera

⁹¹ Paul Begheyn, *Peter Canisius and His Catechism: The History of a Bestseller*, Nijmegen: Museum Het Valhof, 2005, p. 18.

⁹² See Begheyn, “Canisius,” p. 635.

⁹³ Pedro Canisio, *San Pedro Canisio: Autobiografía y otros escritos* (versión y comentarios de Benigno Hernández Montes), 2004, p. 49.

*sentado al mostrador de los impuestos, no quise ni debí resistir a quien me llamaba, sino que como Mateo me levanté y repudí a este mundo inmundo: rompí los lazos que hasta entonces me ligaban fuertemente a él creyendo que podría servir a varios señores enfrentados entre sí.*⁹⁴

From this account we know clearly that the examen played a great role in his first experience of praying according to the *Spiritual Exercises*.

In another occasion Canisius talks again of the value of examination of conscience being helpful in understanding himself and gaining clarity in his desire to follow Christ:

gracias te doy desde lo más íntimo de mi alma, Dios clementísimo, mi creador, salvador y protector, mi vida, refugio y salvación en todos los días y momentos en que me veo zarandeado en este tempestuoso mar de la vida mortal y maravillosamente impulsado de mil maneras hacia las cosas, malas y buenas, hasta el punto de no saber muchas veces qué viento es el que me agita, adónde es arrastrada mi navecilla, dónde debo echar ancla y cómo he de orientar correctamente mi rumbo. Es lo mismo que experimenté en Ancona cuando, en compañía del cardenal de Augsburgo, llegué allí en el mes de junio del año 1568. Estando allí examinando mi conciencia en la iglesia catedral, abriste los ojos de mi entendimiento, oh luz eterna, e iluminaste con clemencia a quien yacía en las tinieblas, para que se conociese a sí mismo, se humillase de verdad mi espíritu y reafirmase de un modo nuevo la decisión de someterse y servirte a ti, Señor, Dios santo y bien total de toda creatura.⁹⁵

It is interesting to note that Ignatius had intended the same to Canisius in a letter written to him while Canisius was in Cologne:

conoce y examina dentro de tu corazón la vocación y la gracia que se te ha dado en Cristo, hazla actuar, insiste en ella, negocia con ella, no permitas que nunca quede ociosa en ti, no te detengas nunca: el mismo Señor es quien nos da el querer y el actuar según su beneplácito, que en sí y por sí es infinito y gloriosísimo, y en nosotros inenarrable por Jesucristo. El espíritu de Jesús te dará la inteligencia de todo y la fortaleza, para que por tu medio fructifique y sea alabado en muchos el nombre de Dios para esperanza de una vida mejor en Jesucristo.⁹⁶

The practice of the examen indeed remained central in the life of Canisius, from the time of coming to know the Society and after making the Exercises where he explored the grace of his vocation.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 92.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 49.

⁹⁶ *Epp.* vol. I, p. 390.

The experience of the *Spiritual Exercises*, where Canisius learnt to look at his conscience from Peter Faber, left a lasting impression on the life and vocation of Canisius and it is beyond doubt that he cherished this all through the life.

Y fue también una merced de la gracia divina el que, ya desde niño, deliberase seriamente y me preocupase de escoger una regla de vida saludable y conveniente para mí e implorase con especial confianza que Dios fuera misericordioso conmigo. Ciertamente el Altísimo favoreció estos deseos y desde Colonia marché solo a Maguncia, guiado por él, cuando allí brillaba el arzobispo y cardenal Alberto de Brandemburgo, primer elector del Imperio. Su teólogo, enviado desde Roma, a quien ya me habían recomendado antes, era Pedro Fabro, natural de Saboya, quien entonces explicaba los Salmos en las aulas maguntinas: era uno de aquellos diez primeros Padres que, eximios por su ciencia y virtud y maestros de pobreza, sustentaban poderosamente, como columnas fundamentales, el edificio de esta Compañía. [...] él me persuadió con prudencia a que, si buscaba instrucción religiosa y quería preocuparme de mi conciencia, me quedase con él algún tiempo y practicase los santos Ejercicios, *para discernir cuál era la voluntad buena, grata y perfecta del Dios soberano sobre mí.*⁹⁷

The autobiography thus vouches for the lasting impression left by the Exercises. We know that for Canisius, the role model in religious life was none other than Ignatius and he imitated the saint in the practice of the daily examen as well. In his exhortations Canisius pointed out the diligence with which Ignatius used to examen himself – as an example for all to grow in union with God.⁹⁸

According to Canisius the examen that Ignatius proposed also was a means to keep purity of intention, to win over temptations, etc. and to this end he advocated the imitation of the founder:

debemos imitarlo en la prudencia natural y sobrenatural, habiendo experimentado en sí mismo diversas tentaciones y escrúpulos. A esta prudencia unía la fortaleza de alma, de modo que no estaba en absoluto preocupado por la carestía que había y por la dificultad de los asuntos, sin dudar de que Dios le ayudaría, aunque fuese pobre y careciese de muchas cosas. Oía con gusto a los demás, pero confiaba en Dios más que en los hombres con un ánimo siempre alegre y tranquilo en todas sus palabras y acciones [...]. Debemos seguir al Padre en la pureza de intención que tenía en todas las cosas, teniendo este lema:

⁹⁷ Canisio, *Autobiografía*, p. 91.

⁹⁸ “Hemos de imitar a Ignacio en la devoción a los santos, especialmente a la bienaventurada Virgen, cuyas Horas solía recitar y en cuyo honor hizo voto de castidad; veneró también mucho al apóstol San Pedro; pero sobre todo fue devoto de Cristo y muy familiar con Dios, como fuente de los bienes; y tenía gran consolación y confianza cuando oraba sobre lo que quería determinar definitivamente, como por ejemplo sobre la modestia religiosa, acompañando no solamente con oraciones, sino también con lágrimas. Se recogía cada hora, veía a Dios presente en todas las cosas y quería que los suyos le implorasen en todas sus acciones.” *Ibid.*, p. 152.

a mayor gloria de Dios; por eso mandó buscar a Dios y la gloria de Dios en todas las cosas.⁹⁹

This indicates that Canisius not only practiced the examen but advocated others to do the same.

In the same line, we see that Canisius, while addressing the novices, exhorted the same spirit of knowing oneself well and removing the defect every day in order to grow in holiness in the Society. He exhorted the novices to practice spiritual exercises which would help them remove defects and keep them in the path of growth:

procurad ante todo declararos la guerra a vosotros mismos y quitar algo en vosotros todos los días a las pasiones del viejo Adán. También os ruego que os familiaricéis con la humildad, como si fuera la reina y maestra de los siervos de Dios, y que no antepongáis nunca nada a la voluntad de los superiores, si es que queréis adquirir alguna vez la verdadera sabiduría. El Señor Jesús nos guarde para su gloria y nos otorgue una ardiente caridad que purifique, ilumine y perfeccione nuestras almas.¹⁰⁰

Similarly, for Canisius, the examen served as an exercise to develop a sense of tranquillity in life, to be a person of prudence and charity, just like Ignatius.

También en el trato ordinario o al tratar los asuntos con los demás hablaba poco y reflexivamente, era parco en sus alabanzas, pero muchísimo más parco aún en sus correcciones, en sus palabras y en sus obras unía una singular prudencia con una extraordinaria modestia, guardando siempre una suma tranquilidad de espíritu, que fortalecía cada vez más con el frecuente examen de conciencia. Y si no podemos llegar a conseguir la integridad, modestia, prudencia, gravedad y caridad de este bienaventurado Padre, procuremos al menos mantenernos sin tacha e irreprochables y apartarnos ante los demás incluso de toda apariencia del mal.¹⁰¹

Thus, we see for Canisius the examen was not only an instrument of growth in self-knowledge but also for knowing the will of God in imitation of the founder.

While talking about the spirit of the Society, Canisius pointed out “el verdadero espíritu de la Compañía consiste en humillarse y mortificarse bien y totalmente a sí mismo, para ser todo de Dios, y a la vez abrazar a todos los hombres con esta sincera voluntad, para

⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 152-153.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 209.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 181.

que se salven: y por esta causa gastarse y desgastarse por completo a gloria de Dios.” And according to him there were four things acceptable to God: “1) los pensamientos limpios; 2) los santos deseos; 3) las palabras dulces de unos para con otros; 4) las obras de caridad.”¹⁰² Here it is clear that Canisius always held the purity of thoughts as an important aspect of his religious life and he practiced the examen to achieve this effect. For, he writes,

orar a Dios frecuente y diligentemente para que nos conceda el verdadero espíritu y gracia de la Compañía. No descuidar nunca nuestras oraciones acostumbradas, constituciones y reglas.

Depender exacta, pronta, gustosa y diligentemente del mandato de la santa obediencia. Esto consiste en tres cosas: en cuanto a la voluntad, que queramos obedecer gustosamente; en cuanto al entendimiento, que reconozcamos que Dios nos manda todo lo que los superiores ordenan e imponen; en cuanto a la ejecución, que todo esto lo hagamos en el Señor: pues, como decía nuestro padre Ignacio, “hay que hacerlo todo en el Señor, en espíritu y en verdad, enérgica y suavemente.” Cosas especialmente necesarias a todos en la Compañía. Gran caridad para con Dios y con el prójimo, oración devota y humilde, mortificación de todas las pasiones, santa sencillez unida a la prudencia, gran paciencia, comunión frecuente del Santísimo Sacramento.¹⁰³

He considered diligent prayer, sacraments, mortifications, and so on as indispensable in living one’s vocation.

We have said that Canisius faithfully practiced the examen in relation to his vocation and the entries in his diary towards the end of his life reveal the intensity of such spiritual practices. In the entry of November 1594 he wrote: “finalizar los estudios a las cuatro de la tarde y, después de un breve paseo, hacer las oraciones, lecturas o meditaciones hasta la hora de la cena. El paseo ha de ser más frecuente antes de la comida y de la cena, después del recreo y en el tiempo de los dos exámenes, para ahuyentar también el sueño.”¹⁰⁴ The desire to grow in the true spirit of the Society was so ardent that Canisius dedicated much time in reading the *Constitutions* and the Rules of the Society. His resolution reads, “dedicar una hora cada tres días a leer las Constituciones o las Reglas. Los días de fiesta rezar las Horas de la eterna sabiduría el rosario de Cristo, las Salve Regina por las Filipinas y nueve Ave Marías por la conversión de las Indias. También cinco Padrenuestros con

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁰³ Ibid., pp. 196-197.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 128.

Gloria por el buen estado de la Iglesia, para ganar las indulgencias de las estaciones.”¹⁰⁵ It is noteworthy that Canisius mentions diligent prayer and frequent communion as practices that help people in the Society. Here we look at in detail how the examen helped Canisius to grow in perfection in prayer life.

4.1.2 Growth and Perfection in Prayer

For Canisius, the practice of the examen was an integral part of growth in perfection in religious life, by practice of charity which flowed from prayer. He talked of prayer as being illumined by God; a time to elevate one’s spirit with great respect. He writes,

si no echamos mano del medio de la oración, no podremos avivar y conservar en nosotros el de la caridad. Donde no hay oración, no hay espíritu, no hay devoción, no hay fervor, no hay gracia. Los tiempos de oración que están mandados son breves, para que nadie pueda quejarse; y por eso son más culpables los que en esos tiempos se estorban a sí mismos la oración y la devoción. Entonces hay que cerrar la puerta y elevar el espíritu con gran reverencia y familiaridad con la divina majestad que se halla presente.¹⁰⁶

According to him a religious was to be filled with God, to be a physician who was expert in all sorts of cures, one who is humble, pure in conscience and perfect in charity. Canisius believed that such path to holiness required the practice of virtues by overcoming affections: “quien aspira a la perfección debe ejercitarse en tres cosas: 1) En extirpar las malas inclinaciones, con el ejercicio de las virtudes contrarias; 2) En vencer las repugnancias; 3) En hacerlo todo por amor de Dios.”¹⁰⁷

In the personal writings Canisius revealed what he thought of prayer in attaining the interior principle of charity:

¿y qué es la oración? Es el estado de la mente iluminada para gozar de Dios, en la medida de lo posible. Es el afecto del hombre que se une a Dios, es una conversación familiar. Entonces hay que coger y preparar las fuerzas que después han de ejercitarse. El comienzo de muchas tentaciones y males está en que estamos ociosos y languidecemos en la oración. De ahí nace principalmente la sequedad de espíritu, la tibieza y repugnancia del bien, la inconstancia en los propósitos, la impaciencia por cosas o palabras de poca importancia, por no unirnos con Dios por medio de la oración. De ahí también que no

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 129-130.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 318.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 196.

seamos buenos cumplidores de la “interior ley de la caridad” y seamos vencidos fácilmente incluso en cosas pequeñas, cuando nos impulsa la tentación.¹⁰⁸

By reminding the importance of the practice of examen and other prayers, Canisius affirmed that one grows in perfection through such practices, whereas negligence and laxity would lead to lack of charity.

Hay también otros defectos en la oración que Satanás busca por todos los medios. Algunos ciertamente oran, pero sin preparación, sin objetivo concreto, sin sabor, sin devoción, sin meditación y sin orden; quieren ser espirituales, pero sin trabajar, sin ejercitarse. El maná no se da más que a los que salen a recogerlo. Por eso no sacan mucho fruto de la oración, ésta no los hace dispuestos para vencerse a sí mismos, diligentes para trabajar y alegres en la cruz, ni compasivos con el prójimo afligido, ni celosos de la gloria de Dios, del bien de la Iglesia afligida y de la salvación de las almas. Como oran, así son oídos; como oran, así se examinan y así aprovechan o decaen en el espíritu; y así se hacen poco a poco de conciencia menos delicada y se van enfriando, de manera que no tienen mucho cuidado de la perfección de su estado, de la caridad debida a Dios y al prójimo y de la obediencia, tanto interior como exterior, debida a los superiores. El abandono o la práctica defectuosa de la oración es fuente de muchos males.¹⁰⁹

Hence, Canisius gave importance to the practice of the examen in prayer life, especially in relation to growth in virtues.

Canisius presents the examen as a way to pray, which in turn played an important role, especially at the beginning when one learns to pray. He cautions

es un mal hábito el abandonar el cuidado de examinar la conciencia y perder el debido dolor por ofender a Dios con nuestras faltas y la debida estima y deseo sincero de la perfección que hemos prometido, sin pensar que estamos obligados ante Dios y ante nuestra conciencia a amar a Dios más que los seculares, que no están obligados a los consejos evangélicos y a seguir por la senda de la perfección como nosotros, que por razón de nuestra profesión debemos caminar de virtud en virtud, ambicionar cada día más los carismas más valiosos y ascender a las más altas cimas de las virtudes. Ambicionad los carismas más valiosos; pero quiero señalaros todavía un camino mejor.¹¹⁰

In the mind of Canisius, therefore, the examen was a help to maintain the fervour of prayer that one had developed, it helped one maintain the interior spirit and to have true virtues. For he says, “es un mal hábito el que pensemos que nos es suficiente con guardar las reglas

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 318.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 318-319.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 317.

según la forma exterior, de modo que nuestros defectos no aparezcan ante los demás ni se noten, sin hacer caso en su observancia del espíritu interior; los que así obran tienen una apariencia de virtud, pero contradicen a la virtud, no hay verdadera caridad en ellos.”¹¹¹

Canisius further insists that the examen is also a way of paying attention to the small details that would aid in the advancement of prayer, and therefore he warns against leaving out this practice.

Es un mal hábito no atender a las acechanzas del demonio, que está al acecho e inspira al religioso que dé poca importancia a los pequeños defectos, de modo que por ellos pierda poco a poco el espíritu, omitiendo las cosas tocantes a lo espiritual, se preocupe poco de la observancia de las reglas y descuide los demás medios para conservarse en el temor y en el amor. Y así ocurre que piensa que no le es necesario, como antes, orar, meditar, examinar la conciencia, hablar y ocuparse de cosas espirituales, corregir los defectos, controlar la lengua, los ojos y los oídos y tener mayor sed de justicia cada día, aunque quiera amar a Dios; y mientras tanto anda buscando diversos consuelillos con los de fuera, va creciendo en él la curiosidad de saber, de juzgar y de tratar las cosas de fuera y de conversar con los seculares; y así poco a poco se va enfriando o extinguiendo en él el fuego de la caridad.¹¹²

Therefore, for Canisius the practice of the examen was crucial in spiritual life; it was a practice through which one learned to improve his relation with God. The lack of such spiritual practices slackens the religious and gradually made to lose the spirit of the congregation. Along with the practice of such exercises, Canisius also found great value in observance of various rules and regulations of the Society which are meant for perfection. He spelt out some aspects which would be a disturbance for a person in the way to perfection and he talks of lack of mortification, not ordering one's inclinations, looking for one's own will and the like.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid., pp. 317-318.

¹¹³ The possible disturbances that Canisius talks are: “1. el amor desordenado a sí mismo y a las creaturas; el excesivo goce de los sentidos en las cosas exteriores; buscarse demasiado a sí mismo y las propias cosas por cierto amor personal. 2. El amor a sí mismo y la propia complacencia; cierta oculta soberbia de la mente por las obras buenas. 3. El amor a la alabanza y a la gloria humana; deseamos agrandar y tenemos miedo a disgustar a los hombres. 4. La imperfecta resignación de la propia voluntad y juicio ante Dios y ante los superiores. 5. La negligencia y dificultad en mortificar las inclinaciones; la escrupulosidad desordenada. 6. El ocuparse con excesiva preocupación de las cosas exteriores, de donde resulta que el espíritu disipado no se recoge fácilmente. 7. La gran negligencia e inconstancia en el hombre exterior, la negligencia en la oración, la precipitación en hacer las cosas, el hastío y la tibieza en el servicio divino, la

For Canisius, negligence in prayer, disordered attachment to oneself and one's own glory were the major causes of disturbance, and as we have seen earlier, the examen and other prayers assist the growth in devotion. And, among the means that he proposes we can find the examen, opening one's conscience to the confessor, frequent prayer, and so on.¹¹⁴ Thus, for Canisius the examen was an indispensable part of the spiritual life, be it a help in removing the disordered affections or as an instrument of growth in the life of perfection. Canisius also proposed the use of the sacrament of confession to profit in this process of growth and we see that he proposed this in the exercises he directed in 1588.¹¹⁵ In the meditation on sin, Canisius suggests that one recalls all the mortal sins committed in order to induce great pain and subsequently remorse and conversion. In this way Canisius proposed the use of confession after a general examen of life just as Ignatius taught.¹¹⁶

falta de diligencia en la guarda del corazón y de los sentidos. 8. Hacer las propias cosas, leer las horas canónicas y celebrar por rutina." Ibid., p. 199.

¹¹⁴ It is interesting to notice that Canisius talks about being internally free, trusting in God, looking for God's will in everything, and so on. The following list provides a better idea: "1. Conservar la libertad de espíritu en cualquier lugar o acción. 2. No perder nunca la santa alegría y gozo en el Señor. 3. Actuar reflexivamente en todas las cosas y asuntos. 4. Tener presente a Dios en todas partes. 5. Abrir siempre del todo la conciencia al confesor. 6. Unir nuestras obras y nuestra intención con las obras e intención de Cristo. 7. Hacer oración frecuente y gozosamente, pero con discreción, no sobrepasando las propias fuerzas. 8. Reconocer siempre la propia nada, pero a la vez confiar mucho en la bondad de Dios. 9. No confiar absolutamente nada en el propio juicio. 10. Desear tener pocas cosas y someterse a toda creatura. 11. Desear padecer por Cristo. 12. Tener siempre el corazón libre de toda inclinación hacia cualquier creatura. 13. Guardar perfectamente lo que nos ordena la santa obediencia. 14. Buscar en todas las cosas la voluntad de Dios y cumplirla con toda la fuerza del espíritu. 15. Frecuentar los sacramentos, pero siempre con la mayor reverencia. 16. En cualquier oración, ante todo dar gracias a Dios por los innumerables beneficios recibidos de él. 17. En cualquier oración, extender la caridad a todos, vivos y difuntos, amigos y enemigos, etc." See Ibid., p. 198.

¹¹⁵ Canisius directed Sebastian Werro in Spiritual Exercises from 30 August to 3 September when Werro was the parish priest of St. Nicholas of Freiburg in Switzerland. See the comments of the editor in Canisio, *Autobiografía*, pp. 188ff., especially note 79.

¹¹⁶ Werro records exactly the points proposed by Canisius. "¿Y qué es Dios, contra quien he pecado de tantas maneras? ¿No es la suma potencia, sapiencia, bondad, justicia? Pues comparado con Dios, ¿qué puedo ser, sino la suma y extrema flaqueza, ignorancia, malicia, iniquidad, etc.? V. ¿Cómo no me admiraré con razón de que las criaturas me hayan perdonado, a mí indigno, me hayan otorgado tantos beneficios y me hayan sufrido como enemigo de su Señor? ¿Por qué no vengan mis pecados los ángeles, los santos, los cielos y los elementos? ¿Por qué no me sorbe la tierra? ¿Por qué no me traga el infierno? VI. Miraré a Cristo colgado en cruz y de tantos modos misericordioso; proclamaré sus beneficios; confesaré mi maldad e ingratitud, implorando su consejo y ayuda: recordaré qué cosa digna he hecho por él, qué debería o debo hacer en adelante *Pater noster*." Werro further recalls how, inspired by the *Confessions* of St. Augustin, he made the examination of his whole life and confessed the following day: "San Agustín escribió los libros de las Confesiones: a ejemplo suyo se me ha mandado escribir todos mis pecados, después de recorrer y examinar toda mi vida, y hacer mañana confesión general, lo que concluí finalmente a las diez de la mañana." Canisio, *Autobiografía*, pp. 188-189.

The intense prayer life of Canisius and the diligence in examining his conscience is known to us not only from the personal writings but we have also the testimony of his contemporaries like Jorge Scherer.¹¹⁷ Testifying that Canisius was a dedicated practitioner of the examen Scherer talks of the intensity and fervour of prayer:

pero una cosa se grabó siempre en mi corazón y sigue aún grabada en él: y es que una vez, picado de la curiosidad, miré por el ojo de la cerradura hacia el interior de su habitación, para saber qué significaban unos gritos que llegaban a mis oídos; y entonces vi y oí al R Canisio que estaba de rodillas, que, estando en oración, hablaba, gritaba y discutía con Dios con fervor y a grandes voces [...]. Pero después sí pude extraer una probable consecuencia: que Canisio no solamente fue un gran orador ante los hombres con la elocuencia de este mundo, sino también un gran orador intercesor ante el Altísimo. Me topé también con unos papeles en los que Canisio había anotado cuidadosamente los pensamientos que tenía durante todo el día, en lo que demostraba la grandísima diligencia que tenía en examinar su conciencia.¹¹⁸

From all that we have said so far, there is no doubt that Canisius held the examen in great esteem for growth in his vocation and prayer.

4.1.3 The Particular Examen and Perfection

The practice of particular examen is closely connected to the idea of perfection that Canisius reveals in his personal writings and we know from those that he valued it much.¹¹⁹ For him this practice was an exercise of growth in perfection in religious life in order to overcome vainglory, gluttony, etc. Canisius understood the particular examen as the most effective means to counter the tendency of selfishness. For, he writes,

reflexionar frecuentemente para recogerse antes y después de los estudios, descansar de vez en cuando, hablar menos, abstenerse de palabras que juzgan a los demás, prescindir de las cosas ajenas, considerar superiores a todos, no pedir nada a la ligera, llevar el examen particular, vencerse en la soberbia, gula y pereza, refrenar el ansia desenfrenada de estudiar, tener mayor familiaridad con Dios, progresar en la abnegación de sí mismo y en el celo de las almas, no reprender fácilmente a nadie, insistir en buscar la devoción, ejercitarse frecuentemente en la pura caridad con el prójimo, pasar por alto los defectos

¹¹⁷ Jorge Scherer was a native of Schwaz (Tirol) who joined the Society in 1559 in Vienna, at the age of 19. He worked in Austria for more than forty years, teaching the Catholic faith through his writings. The incident he narrates here occurred while Scherer was a novice at Vienna and it was his turn to clean the room of Canisius as an act of humility.

¹¹⁸ Canisio, *Autobiografía*, p. 351.

¹¹⁹ These entries regarding the importance of the particular examen are found in section of 1594 and 1595 and they are part of the proposals that he made for himself during the Spiritual Exercises. We see this mentioned two years prior to his death, reaffirms the great role of the examen in Canisius' life.

ajenos como si estuviera con los ojos cerrados y mirar la propia viga, pedirle virtudes especiales y contemplarlas en Cristo.¹²⁰

In his exhortation to the community Canisius talked of self-seeking as one of the prominent impediments against charity – for charity was the hallmark of perfection.

Canisius pointed out that one does not love God as he/she should because people seek only their proper interest and love oneself inordinately, and he proposed the particular examen and abnegation as effective against such a vice.

El primer impedimento es la naturaleza y el amor natural, por el que el hombre busca y se ama a sí mismo y su interés. No hay mayor enemigo de la caridad que este amor natural a sí mismo. No le es fácil al hombre discernir este amor a sí del amor divino, porque el hombre debe mantener una lucha perpetua entre los dos. Esta naturaleza es más peligrosa cuanto más oculta, engañosa e insidiosa, se mezcla incluso en las cosas espirituales y ejerce su poder a veces no por Dios, sino por el respeto humano y el premio temporal.¹²¹

He also believed that improper or the very lack of prayer caused much harm and they were to be avoided in order to grow in life. He proposes:

¿por qué no amamos a Dios como se debe?: 1º, por buscar nuestro interés y amarnos desordenadamente. Contra esto necesitamos la luz del entendimiento, el examen particular y la abnegación; 2º, por actuar con malos hábitos, como relajarnos después del noviciado, proceder sólo con apariencias de virtud, no tendrá la perfección, dar poca importancia a los pequeños defectos; 3º, por dejar o hacer mal la oración. Hay que evitar muchos defectos en la oración. El abandono o deficiencias en la oración son fuente de muchos males.¹²²

This proves that in order to overcome impediments in life Canisius proposed the particular examen, done always with desire to improve. For he says,

Necesitamos de la luz del entendimiento para conocer qué naturaleza y malas inclinaciones tiene cada uno y qué remedios hay que aplicar y qué virtudes contrarias hay que ejercitar, como advierten las reglas 14 y 20. Necesitamos del examen particular, con verdadero propósito y deseo de aprovechar. Necesitamos acordarnos de la regla 12a: “Su mayor y más intenso oficio debe ser buscar en el Señor nuestro su mayor abnegación y continua mortificación en todas cosas posibles”. Cuando no hay este deseo de progresar, este esfuerzo continuo por abnegarse y mortificarse en todas las cosas, no hay modo de

¹²⁰ Canisio, *Autobiografía*, pp. 128-129.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 314.

llegar a la caridad y a su perfección, sino que el hombre permanece frío en la caridad y a veces la pierde por completo por una falsa seguridad.¹²³

Canisius considered the particular examen as closely linked with perfection in life. He pointed out that as a matter of fact, the particular examen is made along with the daily general examen, hence inseparable from it.

4.2 *The Catechism and the Examen*

We have seen so far the personal writings of Canisius where he talked of the examen. Talking about the practice of the examen in the writings of Peter Canisius we cannot but talk of the *Catechism*. This is so not only because Canisius is identified so much by this great work but more so because he deals with examining one's conscience within the frame work of this instruction for the faithful. Canisius' work influenced a large population in living their faith especially as an instrument to teach true doctrine on the face of Protestant reformations. We can say that the *Catechism* was born as a response to the request by the Council of Trent that urged bishops and priests to instruct the faithful in correct doctrine.¹²⁴ Ignatius had urged Canisius to work towards a sound theology which could be taught to children and to common people. Moreover, for Ignatius teaching of catechism to children was closely related to the very vocation to the Society, and he wanted all to practice this wholeheartedly. In 1554 Ignatius had written:

vedendo il progresso che hanno fatto gli eretici in così breve tempo, dilatando il veleno della loro mala dottrina per tanti popoli e regioni, e pigliando anche il verso per andare innanzi, “*cum sermo eorum ut cancer serpat in diez;*” pare che la Compagnia nostra, essendo accettata dalla provvidenza divina fra li mezzi efficaci per riparare a tanto male, non solamente debba essere sollecita a preparare remedi buoni, ma pronti e che possano to estendersi, adoperandosi, quanto più presto potrà, a preservare quello che resta sano, e a curare quello che già è ammorbato dalla peste eretica, massimamente nelle nazioni settentrionali. Come dunque gli eretici col rendere la loro falsa teologia popolare e proporzionata alla capacità del volgo, e predicarla ai popoli e nelle scuole, e con spargere libri piccoli che possano essere da molti intesi e comprati, stendendosi con gli scritti dove non potevano per mezzo dei loro ministri.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 316. The Rules that Canisius refers to are the Summary of the Constitutions.

¹²⁴ Cf. Pedro Canisio, *Doctrina Cristiana* (edición crítica y notas de las versiones castellanas de Rafael Zafra Molina), Palma de Mallorca: Olañeta, 2014, p. 28*. (In this edition, the comments by the editor take a star * along with page numbers while the rest of the text goes without it.)

Le conclusioni principali di questa teologia, come un breve catechismo, si potrebbero insegnare alli putti, come adesso s. insegna la dottrina cristiana, e così alli popoli rozzi, non troppo infetti e capaci de sottigliezza; e questo pure si potrà fare coi nostri scolari piccoli nelle scuole più basse, facendo loro imparare a mente. Per quelli delle classi maggiori, come la prima, e se paresse, la seconda, e per quelli delle arti e della teologia in alcuna ora del giorno, nella quale non si facciano le lezioni, pare che si dovrebbe leggere la somma di teologia, di cui si è detto di sopra; acciochè tutti quelli, che hanno qualche attitudine, fossero istruiti nelli luoghi communi, et potessero insegnare e predicare la dottrina cattolica, refutando la contraria, quanto basta per il popolo: e questo specialmente pare che sia da farsi nelli collegi della superiore e inferiore Germania e della Francia e in altri luoghi, ove fosse il medesimo bisogno. Quanto a quelli che non hanno ingegno atto per studi gravi, o l'età loro non lo comporta, basterebbe, oltre lo studio delle lingue, che attendessero a questa teologia sommaria e ai casi de coscienza per essere operai buoni e utili al bene commune.¹²⁵

We know that against such backdrop of the desire of Ignatius to setup colleges and schools to teach sound doctrine to people,¹²⁶ Peter Canisius, Alfonso Salmerón and Claude Jay had begun their work at the universities in Vienna and Ingolstadt. As we have mentioned earlier, Canisius brought out three different publications and they are *Catecismo minimo*, *Catecismo breve (Institutiones christianae pietatis)* and *Suma de la Doctrina Cristiana* according to the varying need of the public.¹²⁷

Forming the conscience of the faithful was indeed a concern close to the heart of Canisius and he worked tirelessly for this. All his writings were oriented towards this goal, and this desire to reach to the conscience of the people was dear to his heart, acting as an impetus of all his pastoral activities. In a letter written to the bishop of Würzburg¹²⁸ Canisius talks of the importance of such a catechesis:

tan importante es (si es que creemos a Cristo el Señor y a su sagrado Evangelio) servir a los niños y trabajar por formar sus conciencias en la virtud, como hacen los buenos catequistas, desempeñando un oficio no sólo cristiano, sino también, por así decirlo, angélico. [...] sino que se presentasen como maestros guías en este camino, a fin de que no catequicemos de mala gana a los rudos y a los niños en la enseñanza de la fe, sino que, como madres, les suministremos con ilusión y prontitud la leche del espíritu [...]. Y si no existiera otra razón, nos debieran ciertamente estimular e impulsar el ímprobo esfuerzo y el incansable afán de los adversarios, de modo que el trabajo que ellos se toman día y noche para propagar su secta y corromper las almas por medio del catecismo lo troquemos

¹²⁵ *Epp.* vol. XII, pp. 259ff.

¹²⁶ In the same letter that we just quoted, Ignatius opines setting up of schools and colleges to reach out to more people.

¹²⁷ See *Sommervogel*, Vol. II, p. 618ff; Begheyn, "Canisius," p. 634.

¹²⁸ Julio Echter was the Bishop of Würzburg who worked tirelessly for Catholic faith by starting a university and a seminary for the same purpose. See Canisio, *Autobiografía*, pp. 232ff.

nosotros sin pereza en instruir correcta y virtuosamente a los católicos con la misma diligencia, pero con una fe mejor y con la enseñanza de un catecismo más puro [...]. Por eso los padres del concilio de Trento, entre otras muchas cosas que determinaron estupendamente para preservar la religión católica, sancionaron también con sumo cuidado que todos los párrocos no solamente se preocuparan de dar sermones al pueblo los días de fiesta, sino también de enseñar el catecismo después de comer e instruir en la fe a todos los ignorantes.¹²⁹

Against this background we can better appreciate what Canisius had in mind when he prepared such a catechism.

In the *Suma*, Canisius proposed the sacrament of Reconciliation (*sacramento de la penitencia*) and examination of conscience in the following way: “si, por cierto, y no solo como algunos falsamente piensan, la confesión interior, la cual debemos hacer cada día delante de Dios según ejemplo de David, que dice: yo dije: confesaré al Señor mi injusticia contra mí mismo; pero también es a todos necesaria la exterior que se hace al sacerdote, de todos los pecados que el hombre se acuerda después de examinada con diligencia la conciencia.”¹³⁰ Reminding the people of the great need to confess their sins in order to be clean in their conscience, Canisius says:

hay algunos que piensan que les basta para su salud confesarse a solo Dios, a quien no hay algo escondido, el cual no ignora la consciencia de cada uno. No quieren, no avergüenzanse, o se desdennan de descubrir a los sacerdotes sus pecados, los cuales ha mandato Dios por su Hijo nuestro Señor y Legislador que les sean manifestados, para que los conozcan y hagan juicio de ellos. Pero no quiero que engañe esta opinión, para que tomes vergüenza de confesar tus pecados delante del vicario del Señor que es el sacerdote [...] harás pues con tus ruegos que el sacerdote venga a ti, y haz que sepa tu conciencia sin que le encubras algo.¹³¹

And quoting from the teaching of Pope Leo he appealed that sacraments were like medicine, a sign of great mercy of God:

grande y de muchas maneras es la Misericordia de Dios, la cual socorre de tal manera a los caídos y pecados de los hombres, que quiere que no solo con la gracia del Bautismo, pero aun también por la medicina de la Penitencia y confesión, sea reparada la esperanza de la vida eterna: para que los que habrán violado y corrompido el don grande de la gracia concedida en el Bautismo, condenándose por su propia boca, alcansasen perdón de sus

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 233.

¹³⁰ Canisio, *Doctrina Cristiana*, p. 93.

¹³¹ Ibid., pp. 94-95.

pecados; ordenados en tal manera los socorros de la divina bondad, que el perdón de Dios no se pueda alcanzar sino por ruegos y suplicasiones de los sacerdotes.¹³²

In his effort to help the faithful to better confess their sins and have a clear conscience Canisius clearly distinguishes between venial and mortal sins. “Pecado mortal es pecado actual – como dicen – que quita la vida espiritual y mata el alma del que peca, la cual muerte nos aparta de Dios y de su reino, y nos hace merecedores de eterno castigo [...]. El pecado venial es pecado actual pero no hace el hombre enemigo de Dios, y fácilmente se perdona.”¹³³ He distinguishes the venial sin as real sin and can easily be forgiven, and in this way Canisius emphasized the important role of the sacrament of reconciliation. Canisius also dealt in detail on the seven capital sins¹³⁴ in order to help the preparation of confession and later to make a complete confession of life.

Canisius gave importance to purity of conscience; while explaining the manner in which the sins are expiated Canisius talked of the importance of judging even the ordinary sins. He says,

esto conviene saber: que estos pecados que son más ligeros como es una evagación del corazón, una palabra ociosa, una risa desmedida o destemplada, y otros semejantes que llamamos pecados cotidianos o veniales, y sin los cuales no se pasa esta vida – porque todos ofendemos en muchas cosas –, aunque no sean mortales y al parecer sean tenidos por pequeños, no por eso se deben tener en poco. Porque ofenden a Dios, entristecen o desplacen al Espíritu Santo, ofuscan nuestra consciencia, disminuyen el fervor de la caridad, y detienen el aprovechamiento en las virtudes, y muchas veces nos llevan a mayores vicios y peligros.¹³⁵

While insisting that it was important to keep away from small sins in order not to gradually fall into graver sins, Canisius proposed reciting the *Pater Noster*, self-accusation, beating one’s chest, pious acts to help the neighbour, and so on and so forth as remedies. In this context he also proposed the examination of one’s thoughts as a means to know the sins.¹³⁶

¹³² Ibid., p. 95.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 118.

¹³⁴ He dedicated one chapter on the Seven Capital Sins, explaining each in question-answer style making it easy for all to grasp the meaning. See *ibid.*, pp. 122ff.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 145.

¹³⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 146.

Thus, we could say, in Canisius' pastoral approach the examination of conscience and the confession always went hand in hand.

4.3 Observations

The autobiography and other writings of Peter Canisius reveal the depth of his spiritual life, especially the centrality of the *Spiritual Exercises* in his life. The personal notes and the entry regarding the spiritual practices help us to understand how much the practice of the daily examen helped Canisius to grow in his vocation as well as to make progress in spiritual life. We have seen that for Canisius, the examen was a help in deepening his vocation as well as in understanding his conscience better especially in the early stages of his Jesuit life. We also saw that the examen played an important role in recognizing the difficulties in prayer, in identifying the causes of laxity in prayer, etc. and so we can say that for Canisius, the examen was a moment of discernment. All the effort of Canisius with the help of the examen and other spiritual activities for perfection in life justify that in the life of Canisius it was a discerning examen.

On the other hand, we saw that in his teaching of doctrines and Catholic faith, Canisius employed a thorough examination of conscience coupled with the sacrament of confession. As we saw in the *Catechism*, the emphasis of Canisius was on forming a good conscience in people and the examination of conscience had an important role. The teaching on the distinction of sins and the remedies proposed by him allude to a moralistic examen. In his pastoral teachings Canisius employed the examen in relation to morals and confession, whereas in his personal life we have seen that his approach was different. Thus, the writings of Canisius contain both a discerning and a moralistic examen.

5 Alonso Rodríguez and the Practice of Perfection

Alonso Rodríguez was born at Valladolid in 1538 to Herman Rodríguez and María Grayo. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1557 after completing a bachelor degree in Arts

and having begun a course in theology.¹³⁷ Rodríguez completed his theology after the novitiate and was ordained a priest in September of 1562 and professed solemn vows in 1570, at Medina del Campo. He is better known for his work as the Master of Novices and spiritual guide: Rodríguez served as the Novice Master in Salamanca, in Monterrey, in Montilla, Córdoba for twelve years, and again some years at Sevilla.¹³⁸ His well-known work *Ejercicio de perfección y virtudes cristianas* is the fruit of many years of exhortations given on a weekly basis to different communities, especially between 1589-1595. Rodríguez had given the final touches to the fourth edition of this classic on spiritual progress before his death in 1616. The fame of this work can be gauged from the fact that within ten years translations were available in French, Italian, Latin, German, Dutch and partially in English. After 300 editions and translations in 23 languages *Ejercicio de perfección* still keeps growing in popularity.¹³⁹ Rodríguez was the rector at many communities and attended the fifth General Congregation and contributed much in the governance of the Society.¹⁴⁰

5.1 Perfection in Christian Virtue and the Examen

Rodríguez deals with the examination of conscience in the first part of the work *Ejercicio de perfección*, as the seventh treatise divided into eleven chapters. As the title itself suggests, the concern of Rodríguez is perfection in Christian life and so he considers the examination of conscience as one of the principal and most efficacious means for our

¹³⁷ See John Patrick Donnelly, “Rodríguez, Alonso (II)” in *DHCJ* vol. IV, p. 3394-3395.

¹³⁸ Rodríguez served as the novice master for more than 20 years, apart from being tertian instructor and spiritual guide.

¹³⁹ The popularity had kept growing till Vatican Council II when it was prescribed as a basic literature for novices. Pope Pius XI had compared this work to that of St. Bernard or St. Bonaventure. “El Ejercicio de Perfección debe su gran éxito a su estilo, viveza, pragmatismo espiritual y seguridad de doctrina. Está escrito en el más puro castellano, y puede considerarse a R como un clásico menor en el siglo de oro de la literatura española. Escoge refranes y aforismos, así como numerosas citas de los libros sapienciales, que concretizan puntos abstractos [...]. La Real Academia Española de la Lengua ha reconocido esta obra como autoridad para su Diccionario. Precisamente por su eclecticismo, su espiritualidad es apta para muchas congregaciones religiosas y ha sido invocada como antídoto contra posibles novedades teológicas.” Donnelly, “Rodríguez, Alonso (II)” p. 3394.

¹⁴⁰ Rodríguez had prepared a ‘Memorial’ intended as a help for the GC how to deal with challenges facing the Society. His other work includes *Pláticas de la Doctrina Cristiana* (Sevilla, 1610). See *ibid.*, p. 3395.

spiritual advancement.¹⁴¹ He deals with the particular and general examinations together, in total of 11 chapters, laying more emphasis on the particular examen. In our analysis, therefore, we will briefly treat the particular examen in order to grasp what Rodríguez has in mind about the examination of conscience as such before we look at the general examen specifically.

5.1.1 Role of the Examination of Conscience

Rodríguez puts forward two main reasons for examining the conscience daily: one stops committing sins and one is better prepared not to fall into sins in the following days.¹⁴² Rodríguez insists that giving account daily is of great importance and there will be no chance for negligence and forgetfulness to hinder the progress of a person. Employing various imageries, Rodríguez talks of the examen as settling the account at the end of a day. He says,

como los mercaderes diligentes cada día tantean y hacen cuenta de las pérdidas y ganancias de aquel día, y si hallan alguna perdida la procuran remediar y restaurar con mucha diligencia, así nosotros cada día nos habemos de examinar y tomar cuenta de nuestras pérdidas y ganancias, para que no vaya adelante la perdida y se acabe el caudal, sino que lo restauremos y remedemos luego.¹⁴³

He compares the person who makes no examination of conscience to an uncultivated vineyard full of thorns, and the examen serves like a hoe, uprooting the vice and sinister

¹⁴¹ Alonso Rodríguez, *Ejercicio de perfección y virtudes cristianas* 3 vols., Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1861. “Uno de los principales y más eficaces medios que hay para nuestro aprovechamiento, es el examen de la conciencia, y como tal nos lo encomiendan los Santos. San Basilio que fue de los más antiguos que dieron reglas a monjes, manda que cada noche hagan este examen. San Agustín en su Regla manda lo mismo. San Antonio Abad enseñaba y encomendaba mucho a sus religiosos. San Bernardo, San Buenaventura, Casiano, y todos comúnmente.” Here vol. I, p. 318.

¹⁴² “La primera, para que al día siguiente nos hallemos más dispuestos y preparados para no pecar, ni caer en las culpas en que hoy habemos caído, porque habiéndonos hoy examinado y arrepentido de ellas y propuesto la enmienda, claro está que será eso algún freno para no tornar a cometerlas mañana. Lo segundo, aun para el mismo día de hoy nos será algún freno el habernos de examinar a la noche, porque el saber que habemos de dar cuenta y que nos han de tomar residencia ese mismo día, nos hará andar sobre aviso y vivir con más recato.” Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 319. Here he is using imageries from St. Ephraim and St. John Climacus.

evil that begins to sprout.¹⁴⁴ He further argues that there should be two times marked out, one in the morning and another at night, to examine and to take stock of things.

Further, Rodríguez makes reference to what Ignatius talks of the examen to emphasize the role and importance of this practice in perfection in spiritual life. For him, the personal experience and doctrine of saints are reasons for recommending the examen twice a day and even esteeming the practice of examen more than meditation. Endorsing Ignatius' emphasis on the importance of examen Rodríguez says, “con el examen se ha de ir ejecutando y poniendo por obra lo que uno saca de la oración, que es la mortificación de sus pasiones y extirpación de sus vicios y defectos.”¹⁴⁵ Rodríguez adds that any good member of the Society of Jesus not only practices this but teaches also others to make the general as well as the particular examen to get rid of bad habits. He considered the examen as the most important means in the whole of one's spiritual life: “de aquí habemos de sacar una estima y aprecio tan grande de este ejercicio de examinar cada día dos veces nuestras conciencias, que le tengamos por un medio importantísimo y eficazísimo para nuestro aprovechamiento, y como tal le usemos cada día; y el día que faltáremos en esto, habemos de entender haber faltado en una cosa muy principal de nuestra religión.”¹⁴⁶

Rodríguez insists that no occupation is sufficient to justify the omission of the examen¹⁴⁷ – even sickness and indisposition that are sufficient to excuse oneself from meditation and other long prayers.

No ha de haber ocupación ninguna que baste para dejar este examen y si por alguna ocupación forzosa no le pudo uno hacer a la hora señalada, lo ha de procurar hacer lo más presto que pudiere, como después de comer. Lo primero de todo, ni aun la enfermedad e indisposición, que basta para no tener oración larga, ha de bastar para no hacer los

¹⁴⁴ Rickaby in his translation uses ‘to make a clearance and root out the vice and evil propensity’ while the original reads ‘para quitar y arrancar el vicio y el siniestro malo.’ Compare Alphonsus Rodríguez, *Practice of Perfection and Christian Virtues* (translation of Joseph Rickaby) vol. I, London: The Manresa Press, 1929, p. 372 with Rodríguez, *Ejercicio de perfección*, p. 319.

¹⁴⁵ Rodríguez, *Ejercicio de perfección* I, p. 320.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ This phrase is most often attributed to Ignatius of Loyola, whereas we have not found any documents that support such a view. Rodríguez relies on the authority of Ignatius and the accounts of the companions like da Cámara who testified for faithful practice. We shall see the implications of it later, in our general conclusions.

exámenes; y así es razón que lo tengan todos entendido, que los exámenes nunca se han de dejar, ni el particular, ni el general.¹⁴⁸

He argues that missing the examen is equal to missing the most important part of the day.

5.1.2 The General Examination of Conscience

Rodríguez, basing himself on the *Constitutions*, the Common Rules and the customs of the Society of Jesus, proposes two general examination of conscience always along with the particular examen, at midday and at night before going to bed. The subject matter of the general examination of conscience that proposes is all the faults committed on a particular day or period of examen. In the particular examen one major defect or vice is taken up, while in the general examen all the faults committed on a particular day – be it in thought, word or deed – are taken up. According to Rodríguez, in the particular examen only the ‘king vice’ is taken up, while the rest of the vices become subject matter of general examen. Both the examens go hand in hand and doing the examen on one vice also helps to have a check on all the others and therefore he recommended the general examen along with the particular. He says,

no tiene uno que temer que ocupándose contra un solo vicio y poniendo allí su principal cuidado, los demás le hagan mucho daño. Lo primero, porque ese mismo cuidado que trae de enmendarse de ese vicio particular causará en su anima un horror y aborrecimiento grande contra todos los demás vicios, por la razón común en que todos convienen, y así andando armado y prevenido contra aquel particular, andará armado contra todos y guardado y defendido de ellos, lo segundo, porque el que anda con cuidado en el examen particular de desarraigar de sí una cosa, va cortando la raíz que hay en el corazón para todas las demás cosas, que es la licencia de dejarle salir con todo lo que quiere; y así, el traer examen contra un vicio es pelear contra todos los vicios, porque aquella sofrenada y apercebimiento para aquel particular, lo es también para lo demás [...].¹⁴⁹

For Rodríguez, the two examens are interconnected because they feed into each other; the particular examen is made on one subject while the general deals with many,¹⁵⁰ though both are serving the same purpose of attaining perfection.

¹⁴⁸ Rodríguez, *Ejercicio de perfección* vol. I, pp. 320-321.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

¹⁵⁰ Rodríguez gives a graded approach, dividing the subject matter into parts and degrees. “En tanto grado ha de ser el no traer examen particular sino de una cosa sola, que aun un vicio o una virtud conviene muchas veces, y lo más ordinario, dividir en partes y grados, e ir poco a poco trayendo examen particular, primero

5.1.2.1 The Way to Make the General Examination of Conscience

The way of making the examen proposed by Rodríguez is not much distinct from that of the *Spiritual Exercises* as he writes: “habemos de ofrecer a Dios todos los pensamientos, palabras y obras de aquel día, que todo sea para gloria suya, proponiendo de no ofenderle y pidiéndole gracia para ello. Y todos es razón que tengan costumbre de hacerlo así. Después, dos veces al día, al mediodía y a la noche, habemos de hacer el examen general juntamente con el particular, y así es la costumbre en la Compañía.”¹⁵¹ Rodríguez proposes the examen as a clock of the conscience: “así como se concierta el reloj y se le suben las pesas dos veces al día, a la mañana y a la noche, para que ande concertado; así habemos de concertar el reloj de nuestro corazón con el examen a la mañana y a la noche, para que ande siempre concertado.”¹⁵²

Among the five points of the examen, the first is to give thanks to God for the benefits received, in the words of the author: “pónese primero el acordarnos de los beneficios recibidos, para que contraponiendo a eso las faltas y pecados que nosotros habemos hecho en recompensa de tantos beneficios, tomemos de ahí ocasión para confundirnos y sentirlos más.”¹⁵³ The second point is to ask our Lord the grace to know the faults and sins that one has committed, while the third point is going over the conduct over the day, first for thoughts, then words and finally for actions. The fourth point is begging pardon from God, grieving and repenting for the faults committed. The fifth is to making a proposal of amendment, with the grace of God and ending it with an Our Father.

Thus, Rodríguez follows the same five steps – and in the same order – as Ignatius. The general examen usually lasts for fifteen minutes and Rodríguez suggests to go into the examen already prepared with the first point in order to gain time, if to some the time seems

de una parte o grado, y después de otra, para así poder mejor conseguir lo que desea; porque si lo tomásemos en general todo junto, no haríamos nada.” This is true of general examen also because a better focus gives greater effectiveness. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 326ff.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

too short.¹⁵⁴ “Muy buena devoción sería esta: cada vez que da el reloj, dar una ojeada por nuestra conciencia; y aun algunos usan examinarse tras cada obra que hacen; pero si os pareciere mucho hacerlo cada hora, o tras cada obra, será bueno hacerlo a lo menos tras cada obra de las principales que hacemos en el día; y de algunas ya tenemos orden.”¹⁵⁵

5.1.2.2 Centrality of Repentance in the Examen

According to Rodríguez one should spend the major part of the time on the last two steps, because regret and repentance are the central themes in the whole exercise.

Y así digo, que de tres puntos principales que hay en el examen, que esos otros son como preámbulos, lo principal del tiempo habemos de gastar en los dos postreros, que es en pedir a Dios perdón, arrepintiéndonos y confundiéndonos de nuestras culpas y en hacer propósitos de enmendarnos; y lo menos se ha de gastar en discurrir y traer a la memoria las faltas en que habemos caído. Para eso, que es una parte de las tres, basta la tercera parte del tiempo del examen, y las otras dos sean para esos otros dos puntos, pues son los más principales, y donde está la fuerza y eficacia del examen, y el fruto de él.¹⁵⁶

For Rodríguez the importance is not in calling to mind the faults committed, instead the force and efficacy of the examen is on repentance and shame for having committed them.

Rodríguez gives the lack of repentance as one of the chief reason for not making any profit in the examen. Spending most of the time in the examen just to recall the number of times one has fallen in the faults is not examen, but only recalling. Rodríguez argues that calling to memory is only a starting point and the most effective way to correct oneself is to grieve and repent.

Una de las causas principales porque muchos se aprovechan y enmiendan poco con los exámenes es, porque se les va todo aquel tiempo en andar buscando las veces que cayeron en las faltas, y apenas han acabado este punto, cuando se acaba el tiempo del examen, y hacen superficialmente lo demás: no se detienen dolor y arrepentimiento de sus culpas, ni en confundirse y pedir perdón de ellas, ni en hacer propósitos firmes de enmendarse a la tarde, o esotro día, ni en pedir a Dios gracia y fuerzas para ello; [...]. El medio eficaz para enmendaros es el doleros y arrepentiros muy de veras de vuestras culpas, y proponer

¹⁵⁴ He cites the example of Ignatius who had the habit of examining his conscience every hour, when the clock struck. Another suggestion is to examen every major action as it is completed. What Rodríguez suggests is a reflection on the action as it is done. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 346.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 346-347.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 346.

firmente la enmienda, y pedir a Nuestro Señor gracia para ello; y si eso no hacéis, no os enmendaréis.¹⁵⁷

Insisting on the importance of repentance Rodríguez comments on the importance of keeping hand on one's chest every time one fell into a vice. For him this gesture is not just to remember the number of times one has fallen, rather to make us repent of them at once. This gesture is as though to say 'I have sinned' – it is a practice to make once feel remorse of conscience.¹⁵⁸

Another important aspect of the general examen that Rodríguez proposes is its role in confession, for he says the general examen is the proper and legitimate preparation (“la disposición y preparación propia y legítima”) for confession. According to Rodríguez the two dispositions required for confession are examination of one's faults and sorrow for them, and these two are fulfilled in the examination of conscience and hence one who makes the examen can also confess well.

5.1.3 The Particular Examination of Conscience

Out of the eleven chapters that deal with the examination of conscience, Rodríguez dedicates only the last two for general examen while the rest of the chapters are explicitly on the particular examen aimed at perfection of Christian life. For Rodríguez, as we have already noted, the particular and general examinations of conscience are intimately linked.

El particular se hace de una cosa sola, y por eso se llama particular; el general se hace de todas las faltas que en el día hemos hecho en pensamientos, palabras y obras, y por eso se llama general, porque lo abraza todo. Trataremos primero del examen particular, y después diremos brevemente del general lo que hubiere que añadir; porque en muchas cosas lo mismo se ha de hacer en el general que en el particular; y así, lo que se dijere del particular, servirá también para el general.¹⁵⁹

We will take a look at what Rodríguez talks on the particular examen in order to better understand his views on it.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 338-339.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 347.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 321.

5.1.3.1 Subject Matter of Particular Examen

According to Rodríguez, the most important element in the particular examen is to choose the right subject matter, and he identifies this as the weakest point of fortification (“la parte más flaca del muro”),¹⁶⁰ and, “habemos de mirar y reconocer con atención la parte más flaca de nuestra ánima y más desamparada de virtud, que es aquella donde la inclinación natural, o la pasión, o mala costumbre, o hábito malo más nos lleva, y ahí habemos de poner mayor recaudo.” This is because the purpose of the particular examen is to root out the vice that demands our attention most as this weakness would be the one that leads us to dangers and make us commit grave faults. Rodríguez calls the subject matter of the particular examen as the ‘*King Vice*,’ the greatest inclination that is capable of carrying the person away. “Por experiencia vemos que comúnmente cada uno tiene un vicio como rey, que le lleva tras sí por la grande inclinación que tiene a aquello; hay unas pasiones que llaman predominantes, que parece que se enseñorean de nosotros y nos hacen hacer lo que no queríamos, [...]”¹⁶¹

With regard to the choice of the subject for particular examen, Rodríguez points out that giving an account of conscience to the confessor,¹⁶² is of great profit, not just about on what the particular examen is being made, but also on the profit one derives from it.

Pero, en particular, uno de los mejores avisos que en esto se puede dar, es que cada uno lo comunique con su confesor y padre espiritual, habiéndole dado primero entera cuenta de su conciencia, de todas sus inclinaciones, pasiones, aficiones y hábitos malos, sin quedar cosa que no le descubra; porque de esa manera, vista y entendida la necesidad de

¹⁶⁰ The imagery of the fort holding against an attack is from the *Spiritual Exercises* as mentions Rodríguez. “Dice que el demonio se ha con nosotros como un capitán que quiere combatir y conquistar una ciudad o fortaleza, el cual procura con toda diligencia reconocer primero la parte más flaca del muro, y allí asesta toda la artillería y emplea todos sus soldados, aunque sea con peligro de la vida de muchos, porque derrocada aquella parte, entrará y tomará la ciudad: así el demonio procura reconocer en nosotros la parte más flaca de nuestra ánima para combatirnos y vencernos por allí.” Here we will recognize the proximity of this to the rules for the discernment of spirits [*Sp. Ex. 327*] which says, “Asimismo se [ha] como un caudillo, para vencer y robar lo que desea. Porque, así como un capitán y caudillo del campo, asentando su real y mirando las fuerzas o disposición de un castillo, le combate por la parte más flaca, de la misma manera, el enemigo de natura humana, rodeando, mira en torno todas nuestras virtudes teologales, cardinales y morales; y por donde nos halla más flacos y más necesitados para nuestra salud eterna, por allí nos bate y procura tomarnos” and surely Rodríguez is drawing on this important principle.

¹⁶¹ Rodríguez, *Ejercicio de perfección* I, p. 321.

¹⁶² Alonso Rodríguez dedicates a whole treatise on the account of conscience (treatise XXIII) emphasizing the role of the account of conscience in growth in virtues.

cada uno, y las circunstancias particulares, será fácil determinar de qué le convendrá traer el examen particular.¹⁶³

Rodríguez observes that such an openness to the confessor would also be helpful in the general examen as it will be there one comes to know of the inclinations, passions and habits that lead one away from perfection in virtues. For Rodríguez, regular prayers and confession to a fixed spiritual father¹⁶⁴ – to whom one gives an account of conscience – are important practices in spiritual improvement, for such a person can see what profit one is making from prayers; he would be able to judge if the person is advancing or falling away, can suggest changes or encourage, etc.¹⁶⁵ For him, the sacramental confession was a great bridle¹⁶⁶ to restrain people from sin as well as an important means of salvation.

Así como la frecuencia de la confesión es uno de los medios más principales que podemos dar a uno para su salvación; porque fuera de la gracia y perdón de pecados que se da en este Sacramento, están allí encerrados todos los remedios y consejos que se le pueden a uno dar; y así cuando queremos que uno allá en el mundo se aproveche mucho, dámosle un consejo: una vez, que rece el Rosario; otra, que oiga misa cada día si puede; otra, que oiga sermones; otra, que haga examen de su conciencia; otra, que haga algunas penitencias, y que procure no se le pase día ninguno en que no haga alguna penitencia: pero finalmente, para echar el sello, dámosle por remedio que se confiese a menudo con un buen confesor [...].¹⁶⁷

Although Rodríguez categorizes the suggestion with regard to subject matter of the examen according to the parts and degrees of virtues¹⁶⁸ under particular examen, they actually come under general examen, because the particular examen must be made on one thing only, whereas here he is in fact listing all the possible aspects of the general examen.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ Rodríguez, *Ejercicio de perfección* I, p. 323.

¹⁶⁴ “[...] y por esto aconsejan los maestros de la vida espiritual a los penitentes que tenga cada uno su confesor firme [...]” Rodríguez, *Ejercicio de perfección* III, p. 327.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 327-328. “Porque aquí ve el superior o prefecto de las cosas espirituales como os aprovecháis del medio de la oración, de los exámenes y de la lección espiritual; aquí ve como vencéis las tentaciones, y las inclinaciones y condición mala que tenéis”. The direct reference to confession is an important point in our discussion, because this clearly indicates the type of examen Rodríguez visualizes.

¹⁶⁶ “La confesión sacramental es un freno grande para retraer a los hombres” reads the original, while Rickaby in his translation uses ‘great bridle.’ See Rodríguez, *Practice of Perfection*, vol. II, p. 615.

¹⁶⁷ Rodríguez, *Ejercicio de perfección* III, p. 327.

¹⁶⁸ Chapter V deals with ‘how to divide the particular examen according to the parts and degrees of virtues.’

¹⁶⁹ In this section there are eleven virtues given as possible subject matter: under these he offers humility, fraternal charity, mortification, abstinence/gluttony, patience, obedience, poverty, chastity, doing ordinary actions well, and doing all things purely for God. As it is obvious, all of them cannot be matter of particular examen, but they can be subjects of general examen. See Rodríguez, *Ejercicio de perfección* I, pp. 327ff.

5.1.3.2 How to Make the Examen and the Key

For Rodríguez “esta santa porfía es la que vence el vicio y alcanza la virtud, y no el dar arremetidas” becomes the important principle in particular examen. He reminds that in the business of perfection, success is indeed won not by fits and starts, but by long perseverance because one has to work on the most important aspect, even though there would be obstacles.

Hasta que vaya tan decaído el vicio, que en asomando y rebelándose, luego le podáis fácilmente reprimir y sujetar con la razón. De manera que no es menester esperar a no sentir la pasión ni la repugnancia que eso sería nunca acabar [...]. Basta que ya aquel vicio o pasión no os sea molesta ni os dé mucho en que entender, sino que en levantándose, la aventéis y echéis de vos con facilidad [...]. Peleamos contra los vicios, no para vencerlos del todo sino para no ser vencidos. No es menester que del todo no sintamos el vicio, basta que vaya ya de vencida, de manera que no nos sea impedimento ni estorbo para lo que nos conviene.¹⁷⁰

For Rodríguez, the duration of the examen depends on the type of vice one is dealing with, as some of it may be overcome – when one is no longer disturbed by it – in a short time while others may need a year or even much longer period.¹⁷¹

The particular examen has three times and is done twice and he proposes three points to make the examen: asking for the grace, taking account and feeling sorry.¹⁷² The two most important aspects that Rodríguez proposes in the examen are feeling of sorrow and a purpose of amendment. These are central to the manner of examen – both particular and general – in the way of perfection.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 335.

¹⁷¹ Rodríguez points out that it is not easy to root out vice, for, ‘if every year we root out one vice, we should soon be perfect.’ He adds, ‘there are people who spend lifetime on one virtue in order to be perfect in it,’ also it would be reasonable to interrupt the examen in order to choose another virtue. While these are true of particular examen, what is applicable to general examen is to choose the area of examen according to greater need, the general orientation of life. The suggestion of choosing the subject matter in consultation with the confessor/spiritual father is applicable here also. Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁷² Rodríguez advocates the use of a log-book to keep track of the number of times one has fallen in the particular defect, like in the *Exercises* [24]. Citing the examples of many saints who used this method of comparing the days and weeks, Rodríguez proposes diligent use of particular examen. “El modo que nos pone Padre de tomar la enmienda de nuestra falta a trechos y poco a poco, de medio día en media día no más, es un medio que ponen San Crisóstomo, San Efrén y San Bernardo por eficacísimo para desarraigar cualquier vicio o falta que tengamos.” See *ibid.*, p. 337.

5.2 Observations

Rodríguez treats the general examination of conscience as a means of repentance and to grow in perfection. When he says the examen is the legitimate preparation for confession he places clearly as a practice of getting rid of one's sins; it is an exercise of examination of one's faults, for he says the who makes the examen well, confesses well. The object of particular examen is to get rid of the king vice, the greatest obstacle in growth in perfection, and this indeed demonstrates as a moralistic examen. According to Rodríguez, the purpose of the examen is to get rid of the faults and imperfections, as he proposes in the particular examen. He proposes the general examen as a means to repent and through this to attain perfection in virtues.

Though, often Rodríguez treats the examen as a moralistic exercise, we can also see some trace of discerning principles: “dice que en el examen no solamente se ha de tener cuenta con las faltas en que caemos, sino mucho más con la raíz de las faltas, examinando la causas y ocasiones que hubo para caer, para preveniros y guardarnos de ellas de ahí adelante.”¹⁷³ Other than the mention of finding the root cause, the rest of the treatises on examen deal with the moralistic way. Rodríguez visualizes the examen as an inner clock of the conscience, a governor or a master.¹⁷⁴ The role of examen is to mortify, to control the passions and to grow in virtues, all of which have the aim of perfection in Christian life.

6 Francisco Suárez

Francisco Suárez was born in Granada on 5 January, 1548 in a distinguished Christian family of Gaspar Suárez de Toledo and Antonia Vázquez de Utiel.¹⁷⁵ In 1558 he received the tonsure of a cleric in Granada where he was studying Latin and rhetoric and later he went to Salamanca to study Law. In 1564 he entered the Society in Salamanca and

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ “El que hiciere cada día este examen de la conciencia bien hecho, puede hacer cuenta que trae consigo un ayo y maestro de novicios, y un superior que cada día y cada hora le está pidiendo cuenta, y avisando de lo que ha de hacer, y reprendiendo en faltando en cualquiera cosa.” Ibid., p. 348.

¹⁷⁵ Francisco Suárez, *Los ejercicios espirituales de san Ignacio de Loyola. Una defensa* (Introducción, notas y traducción de Josep Giménez Meliá), Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 2003, p. 10.

completed his studies in philosophy and theology by 1570.¹⁷⁶ Suárez taught philosophy at Segovia and Valladolid before he was called to Rome to teach theology at Colegio Romano. In 1585 he left Rome for Alcalá where he taught theology and later was at Salamanca as theology professor, where he published many of his writings. In 1597 Suárez was at the university of Coimbra at the request of the king Philip II where he made his mark interpreting law.¹⁷⁷ It was in by 1609 that Suárez published his commentary on the *Exercises*, at the request of General Aquaviva, where he defended the Society of Jesus as well as the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius.¹⁷⁸ Suárez is an acclaimed canonist, a philosopher and theologian and his contribution in philosophical thought – Suarezism – occupies an important position in philosophy. Suárez died in 1617.

6.1 *De religione Societatis Iesu* and the Examen

In the writings of Suárez, the examen is presented in his work of defending the *Exercises* as well as the Society, from the criticism of theologians like Melchor Cano. His work *De religione Societatis Iesu* presented the uniqueness of the Society as well as the theological background of the whole of the Ignatian charism. For Suárez, the Society employed means like preaching confession, celebration of the Eucharist, etc. for the purpose of helping people in attaining salvation and Suárez considered the *Exercises* as one the important means in this work.

For Suárez the *Exercises* had a two-fold purpose: they were meant not only for the members of the Society of Jesus but for everybody else: “en la Compañía se hace un doble uso de estos ejercicios: uno por parte de los mismos religiosos de la Compañía que podemos llamar pasivos; el otro es activo, en favor de los prójimos de fuera, a quienes los sacerdotes de la Compañía dan estos ejercicios para enmienda de su vida y para su provecho.”¹⁷⁹ Suárez believed that this book, written under the special grace of God, was meant as a

¹⁷⁶ Eleuterio Elorduy, “Suárez, Francisco” in *DHCJ* vol. IV, p. 3654-3656, here 3654.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3655.

¹⁷⁸ Though Suárez published the first two volumes of *De virtute et statu Religionis* in 1608 and 1609 respectively, the third and fourth volume of his scholarly work was not published until after his death. Cf. *ibid.* What interests us here is his commentary on the *Sp. Ex.* where he deals with the importance of the examen. The V, VI and VII chapters of the IX Book of *De religione Societatis Iesu* deal with the *Exercises*.

¹⁷⁹ Suárez, *Los ejercicios espirituales*, p. 165.

‘novitiate’ for the whole world as the exercises given in that were meant to order one’s life and then to find God.¹⁸⁰ Leaning on the patristic tradition, Suárez too affirms the importance of the examen in day-to-day life in order to amend and order one’s habits and for him they are spiritual exercises, just as Ignatius defined.¹⁸¹

He visualized that all in the Society would use the *Exercises* throughout their life and he pointed out two moments: once or twice annually when one got away from all concerns to dedicate time only for ‘contemplation’ following the example of Christ himself; and secondly in meditation and examen done daily.

El primer uso empieza en nuestros religiosos desde su ingreso en la Compañía: en la primera probación, con estos ejercicios empiezan a hacer penitencia. Los repiten una y otra vez a lo largo de su noviciado, en parte para ser más probados, pero, sobre todo, para instruirse y ejercitarse más en las cosas espirituales, [...]. Se extiende este uso, además, durante toda su vida, y esto por una doble razón: en primer lugar, mediante la meditación cotidiana, la oración y el examen de conciencia, [...]. En segundo lugar, una o dos veces al año, como vimos allí, se retiran durante algunos días, con el fin de que, dando de lado los estudios y las otras ocupaciones externas, se ejerciten en estas meditaciones u otras semejantes, y atiendan sólo a la vida contemplativa, lo cual resulta muy útil para este instituto.¹⁸²

Suárez, by defending the division of Ignatius on thoughts, words and deeds, relates the examen to distinguish something as venial sin or mortal sin. And, he underlines the need to have greater scrupulosity in dealing with venial or mortal sin with regard to thoughts and he affirms that no one commits mortal sin by being negligent.¹⁸³ With regards to sins of

¹⁸⁰ “En segundo lugar, hay que advertir que Ignacio entre las ayudas para fomentar la virtud que dejó a la Orden por él fundada, escribió, no sin un gran auxilio de Dios y una prolongada experiencia, un libro peculiar que llamó Ejercicios espirituales. [...] Ignacio escribió este libro no sólo para utilidad de sus compañeros, sino también para que, con sus ejercicios y reglas, contribuyera poderosamente a la utilidad espiritual de todo el pueblo cristiano. Esta es la razón por la que un importantísimo miembro de la orden de san Bernardo afirmó que este librito, tal como había sido concebido, podía considerarse como un cierto noviciado, apto para todo el género humano.” *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁸¹ “En primer lugar, aparte del sacrificio cotidiano de las oraciones o del oficio de lectura, no debe descuidarse una parte del día para dedicarse al examen de conciencia, a la enmienda y a la ordenación de las costumbres. Después hay que trabajar con las manos, lo cual se prescribe no tanto para entretener el ánimo, deleitándole por unas horas, sino para conservar y nutrir el deleite que proporcionan los ejercicios espirituales. Y añade: Los ejercicios espirituales no están al servicio de los corporales, sino los corporales al servicio de los espirituales. Queda claro así que la lectura, la meditación, la oración y el examen de conciencia se llaman ejercicios espirituales.” The first part is what he quotes S. Bernard to prove his point. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁸² Suárez, *Los ejercicios espirituales*, pp. 165, 167.

¹⁸³ “Todo el tiempo que la delectación dura en aquel estado, aunque se dé alguna negligencia, sólo se peca venialmente. Pues, sin plena advertencia de la razón, no se da el consentimiento de cometer un pecado

deeds, Suárez makes a distinction between mortal sin and grave sin when one does not keep the precepts of the Church or the recommendation of the superiors, as he says, “las dos expresiones ‘se atreve a despreciar y transgredir’ pueden entenderse de dos maneras, a saber, tomadas conjuntamente o por separado. En el primer caso, el asunto es fácil y no da lugar a controversias, pues el sentido será el siguiente: no es un pecado leve despreciar tales indultos y transgredirlos por desprecio. Así se resuelve la citada dificultad: despreciar los consejos y no guardarlos por desprecio es pecado grave.”¹⁸⁴ So for Suárez it is the examen where one distinguishes carefully the mortal from venial sin.

According to Suárez spiritual life is comprised of two aspects, correction of one’s habits and union with God: “la vida espiritual necesita fundamentalmente dos cosas: la corrección de las costumbres y la unión con Dios. Forman parte de la corrección de las costumbres la purgación de las faltas pasadas, el examen diario de la conciencia y la confesión frecuente de los pecados. Ahora bien, lo segundo se obtiene con la meditación y oración frecuentes y con el ejercicio de las virtudes. Para ambas cosas es muy necesaria una recta elección del estado de vida.”¹⁸⁵ For him, the first week of the *Exercises* – the *via purgativa* – is the time to do penance for one’s sins in accordance with the level of sins, and here the examen would help to keep the purity of conscience. Suárez says: “la primera contiene la vía purgativa y por ello su materia es la gravedad de las ofensas a Dios y todas las consideraciones convenientes a este fin y a la necesidad de hacer verdadera penitencia por los pecados. Por ello se le añade el doble examen de conciencia, que ha de hacerse cada día por la mañana y por la tarde, muy útil para conservar la pureza de conciencia y para la confesión frecuente.”¹⁸⁶

It is interesting to note that Suárez also talked of particular examen in order to overcome a specific vice by focusing on it regularly:

me place observar que los dichos Padres sólo trataron del examen de conciencia de un modo general, que debía hacerse una o dos veces, o con más frecuencia durante el día.

mortal, aunque pueda interpretarse así. Y por ello más abajo añade que se peca mortalmente cuando presta asentimiento de la manera que sea al pensamiento pecaminoso.” *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁸⁵ See *ibid.*, pp. 133, 135.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

Sin embargo, el examen particular, que se hace contra un vicio especial, para mostrar un mayor cuidado en corregirlo y, de este modo, erradicar más fácilmente todos los vicios, fue pensado sabiamente por Ignacio. Lo insinuó Basilio en las reglas más breves (regla 289), donde dice que cuando alguien peca más frecuentemente en algo [algún vicio], debe considerar la raíz y allí aplicar especialmente la medicina y – dice – lo mismo [debe hacerse] para cada pecado.¹⁸⁷

Further, Suárez recommended the practice of the examen in order to overcome temptations, vices and scruples in daily life, provided one did it with great care:

sin embargo, de la otra clase de escrúpulos no dijo nada: dio por sentado que fácilmente podría superarse esta tentación si se observaban las prescripciones que había dado para el examen de conciencia y sobre el modo de hacer bien la confesión general (cuando ésta fuera necesaria). Y pensó que dicha tentación podría ciertamente vencerse si se aplicaban, con la debida proporción, los remedios que había dado sobre los escrúpulos del primer tipo.¹⁸⁸

Suárez recommends the same order for doing the examen as Ignatius had proposed in the *Spiritual Exercises*, starting with gratitude in order to induce greater remorse for one's sins. "En el examen cotidiano de todos los defectos – que, por esto, llama examen general – Ignacio aconseja que empecemos con una acción de gracias por los beneficios [recibidos], ya sea porque, al final del día, esto no debe hacerse menos que la reflexión sobre los pecados, ya sea porque ciertamente ayuda mucho para dolerse más sobre la ofensa infligida al benefactor."¹⁸⁹ Thus we can see that Suárez talks of the examen mostly as given by Ignatius.

Suárez relied on the Fathers of the Church to support his views on the examen and he presents the examen as a meticulous practice of keeping an account of one's sins and faults.

Esta fue la costumbre de los Padres antiguos. De San Antonio se dice que se proponía examinarse a sí mismo y poner ante sí la cuenta de todo lo que había hecho durante el día y durante la noche. Si había hecho algo indecente lo anotaba, para abstenerse en adelante de sus faltas, avergonzándose mucho si descubría muchos delitos suyos. Y enseñaba a los monjes que, examinándose día y noche, dejarían de pecar al darse cuenta de sus faltas, etc. También Basilio repite a menudo este consejo. En el sermón sobre la renuncia a las cosas, hacia el medio, dice: Acuérdate, por la noche, de las obras que has hecho durante el día y compáralas con las que hiciste el día anterior, para que puedas ir mejorando de

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 139.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 159.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 137.

día en día. [...] examinar diligentemente todos los pensamientos y acciones de cada día [...]. Al final del día, una vez acabada toda obra, tanto corporal como espiritual, todos harán muy bien si hacen examen de conciencia antes de acostarse.¹⁹⁰

Suárez believed that the Exercises were not meant for everyone, but for those who will profit more; the exercises of the first week were to be given to people of varying capacity because this was proper of the active life, i.e. life of Martha.

Estos ejercicios no se dan a todos por igual y de manera indiferentes, como advierten nuestras Constituciones: dice allí que los ejercicios espirituales hay que darlos a pocos, de quienes se espere un no pequeño fruto para gloria de Dios; que los ejercicios de la primera semana, con el modo de examinar la conciencia, pueden comunicarse a muchos; y que, en cambio, los tres modos de orar, que son más sencillos, pueden asignarse a los más rudos, pues basta la buena voluntad y la buena fe para ser capaces de ello. [...] pues no todos los ejercicios han sido pensados para todos.¹⁹¹

Therefore, for Suárez, the examen was the basic prayer that all could practice; this was the prayer of the active life, one that was meant as purgative.

6.2 Observations

In the scheme of things of Suárez, the examination of conscience is very much linked to the differentiation of mortal sins from venial sins and is closely linked with the sacrament of confession. He understood the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius as the apostolic arm of the Society of Jesus which was solidly based on doctrine of the Church. As an apologetic writing, what Suárez talked of the foundations of the spirituality of the newly formed order was solidly based on the patristic tradition¹⁹² and therefore we see Suárez falls back on the great master of monastic life to interpret the practice of examining one's conscience.

Undoubtedly the focus of the examen proposed by Suárez is sin and he takes great care to interpret the ways to distinguish venial sins from mortal sins. As we have seen, the concern in the examen of Suárez is getting rid of the vices and affections that hinder growth

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 135, 137.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 175ff.

¹⁹² Suárez makes use of the teachings of the greats like San Antonio, St. Bernard, Basil, Bonaventure, John Callimachus, Chrysostom, etc. with regard to the way to make the examen. See. Ibid., pp. 135ff.

in the active life of purgation. Mostly he treats the examen in tandem with the sacrament of confession and therefore we term the examen that Suárez propagates as moralistic.

7 Achille Gagliardi

Achille Gagliardi, born in Padua, Italy in 1537,¹⁹³ joined the Society of Jesus along with his two brothers Leonetto and Ludovico.¹⁹⁴ He joined the novitiate on 29 September, 1559 and was ordained a priest in 1563. After his studies at the Roman College – where he was a fellow student of Robert Bellarmine – he taught philosophy and theology at his *alma mater* for a short while,¹⁹⁵ and later he did his doctorate in theology. Gagliardi had a wide variety of experiences: as rector at Turin from 1568 to 1573, professor at Roman College, worked closely with Archbishop Carlos Borromeo in Milan (where he was the confessor especially of Isabel Bellinzaga),¹⁹⁶ rector at Brescia, superior of the professed community at Venice.¹⁹⁷ He spent his final years at Módena, where he breathed his last on 6 July, 1607.

Two of Gagliardi's works, *Breve compendio*¹⁹⁸ and *Commentarii in Exercitia spiritualia*,¹⁹⁹ were not without controversies right from the beginning. The *Breve compendio* deals with mystical intuitions and how a soul can reach union with God through a 'passive quietness,' while *Commentarii* is an attempt to interpret Ignatian principals of abnegation and deification. His idea of the suspension of all the activities of the soul and

¹⁹³ Daniel Gil thinks that Gagliardi was twenty-one or twenty-two when he joined the Society. This is because he considers his year of birth as 1537 or 1538. However, *DHCJ* reports it as 1539. *Sommervogel* talks of 1537 and since majority of the authors accept this date, we too have adopted this date. See *Sommervogel* vol. III, p. 1095; Daniel Gil, "Gagliardi y sus comentarios a los Ejercicios," in *Manresa* 44 (1972) 273-284.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Giandomenico Mucci, "Gagliardi, Achille," in *DHCJ* vol. II, p. 1547-1548, here 1547.

¹⁹⁵ He taught philosophy from 1562-1566 and theology from 1566-1567. See also de Guibert, *The Jesuits*, p. 257.

¹⁹⁶ Gagliardi, after a year of stay at Padua, reached Milan in 1580 and went on to serve the diocese as assistant to the archbishop and superior of the community. He spent a total of fourteen years there. It is during this period that he started guiding Berinzaga who was known for her mystical intuition. Cf. *ibid.* And with regard to the name: Bellinzaga is a derivation from Berinzaga and modern scholars tend to use the latter. Cf. Rob Faesen, "Achille Gagliardi and the Northern Mystics," in Robert A. Maryks (ed.), *A Companion to Jesuit Mysticism*, Leiden: Brill, 2017, pp. 82-111, here p. 86.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. Mucci, "Gagliardi, Achille," p. 1548. Gagliardi was rector at Cremona for a year, four years at Brescia and six years at Venice. In 1606, when the Republic of Venice expelled all the Jesuits from their territory, Gagliardi went to Módena.

¹⁹⁸ *Breve compendio intorno alla perfezione cristiana*, Brescia, 1611.

¹⁹⁹ *Commentarii seu explanationes in Exercitia Spiritualia Sancti Patris Ignatii de Loyola*, Bruges, 1882.

certain exaggerated expressions put him at the risk of being labelled a “pre-quietist.”²⁰⁰ Other than this, Gagliardi also got into controversies for his involvement in a ‘reformist circle,’ during his stay at Milan. His desire for a radical renewal – aimed at an ‘authentic spirit’ in the Society of Jesus – saw him representing the matter even to the Pope,²⁰¹ and his association with Berinzaga invited attention from the Superior General who had to censure him severely.²⁰² Notwithstanding these, Gagliardi’s *Breve compendio*²⁰³ had great impact for many years, especially in 18th century France.²⁰⁴

7.1 Gagliardi’s Ignatian Principles and the Examen

Gagliardi’s concern was to present a synthesis of the spirituality of the Society of Jesus and to this effect he worked tirelessly. His other works *De plena cognitione*

²⁰⁰ Mucci says, “en el *Breve compendio*, G describe y analiza las intuiciones místicas de Berinzaga: el alma, teniendo por fin su deificación, tiende al aniquilamiento de sí misma y de lo creado, mediante la “quietud pasiva,” que es “suspensión de todas las actividades del alma,” hasta el momento en que Dios la eleva a pura unión. En la obra de G resuena cierto inconsciente prequietismo, que lo conduce, aun permaneciendo dentro de la doctrina católica (sus fuentes principales fueron san Agustín, los Santos Padres griegos y latinos, e Ignacio de Loyola), a expresiones en sí mismas exactas, pero arriesgadas, porque subrayan unilateralmente ciertos aspectos de la vida interior en perjuicio de otros. Esto pudo hacer a G sospechoso, y quizás peligroso, por sus exageraciones. Mucci, “Gagliardi, Achille,” p. 1548. See also Guibert, *The Jesuits*, p. 404.

²⁰¹ Gagliardi went for an audience with the Pope Gregory XIII with regard to a work by Benito Perera. Unhappiness with the outcome, an anonymous letter to the Pope (most probably by Benedetto Giustiniani) and the support of Sebastião Moraes, the Visitor of the Province, to Perera and so on brought the wrath of the Pope, which included prison for Gagliardi. But the General was supportive of him and ordered him out of Rome. See Mucci, “Gagliardi, Achille,” pp. 1547-1548.

²⁰² While at Milan Gagliardi came in contact with Elizabetta Cristina Lomazzi Bellinzaga. Gagliardi had much to do with her and most scholars are of the opinion that he collaborated with her for the work of *Breve Compendio*, though uncertain about the extent of collaboration. Between 1588-1590 this was reported and the matter reached even the Holy Office in 1593. The General Aquaviva ordered Gagliardi to leave Milan and later Pope Clement VIII imposed silence and retraction of the work, in which Robert Bellarmine had interceded for Gagliardi. See Mucci, “Gagliardi, Achille,” pp. 1547-1548; Guibert, *The Jesuits*, p. 258.

²⁰³ It is generally accepted that Gagliardi is the author of this work, though many attribute *Breve compendio* to Berinzaga for majority of its teaching yet there is no conclusive evidence to prove this. During his life time, Gagliardi published only *Catechismo della fede Cattolica* at the request of Borromeo, though he had worked on three projects. The *Breve compendio* is part of the third group of texts that deal with spiritual matters. Cf. Faesen, “Achille Gagliardi and,” p. 85.

²⁰⁴ Pietro Pirri points out that many studies done in France vouch for this fact, among them Marcel Viller, Henri Bremond, etc. See Pietro Pirri “Il P. Achille Gagliardi, la Dama Milanese la riforma dello spirito e il movimento degli zelatoj,” in *AHSI* 14 (1945) pp. 1-72. This work was placed in *Index* for many years and was later removed from the list. See Gil, “Gagliardi y sus comentarios,” p. 274.

Instituti,²⁰⁵ *Discretionem spirituum regulae*²⁰⁶ and *De interiori doctrina*²⁰⁷ were all aimed at this great desire to explain the mystical elements of Ignatian spirituality. He presented six principles which would help Jesuits reach the goal²⁰⁸ – the greater glory of God through the imitation of Christ. Gagliardi insisted on radical theocentrism and conforming one's will to the will of God by getting rid of one's own will. Gagliardi points out two ways to reach perfection: “uno es difícil y místico, peligrosamente lleno de rarezas extraordinarias; otro es común y más fácil, ordinariamente libre de todo fenómeno raro. Gagliardi defiende el camino ordinario, que no es otro que el auto-aniquilamiento de la voluntad, mediante lo cual se llega a amar y actuar ‘en’ la voluntad de Dios reinante en el alma.”²⁰⁹

The importance of Gagliardi's teaching, especially of his commentary, comes from the fact that he is practical: “más que a la práctica de los Ejercicios, a la espiritualidad en ellos contenida, aplicándolos a la vida cotidiana. No encontraremos referencias exclusivas a la situación de un ejercitante, sino más bien, el pensamiento del autor está puesto en la vida espiritual ordinaria, fuera de los Ejercicios, tanto de los jesuitas como de otras personas.”²¹⁰ The focus of Gagliardi is the daily life-situations of ordinary people and to this effect he adapts the *Exercises* to meet the need of them. Hence, what Gagliardi comments about the daily examen has to be seen from such a perspective. In this way, the principles that he employs in the interpretation of the *Exercises*, help us to a great extent.

El primer principio es por similitud o proporción de lo que Ignacio dice con otras cosas de las que no habla. Así el examen se extiende a todos los pecados y defectos; las elecciones a toda adquisición de virtudes; asimismo los títulos y ejemplos que aparecen en el libro de los Ejercicios, pueden a su vez ser completados. El segundo principio es por deducción de lo particular a partir de los principios generales. Es el caso de la resistencia a las tentaciones, de la victoria sobre las pasiones, del discernimiento de espíritus, de los tres modos de orar, etc.²¹¹

²⁰⁵ This refers to the Institute of the Society and Gagliardi divides in two parts namely the goal and the means used by the Society. See Gil, “Gagliardi y sus comentarios,” p. 274, Ignacio Iparraguirre, “Gagliardi,” in *DSp*. VI, pp. 53-64, here p. 55.

²⁰⁶ *S. P. Ignatii de Loyola de discretionem spirituum regulae explanatae*, Nápoles, 1851.

²⁰⁷ This was the ambitious work that Gagliardi was planning but he managed to complete only a part of it called *Praxis cultus interni*. Cf. Gil, “Gagliardi y sus comentarios,” p. 275.

²⁰⁸ The six fundamentals were the *Exercises*, life of Ignatius, traditions of the Society, Papal Bulls, the Constitutions and the decrees of the GCs. Cf. Iparraguirre, “Gagliardi,” p. 55.

²⁰⁹ Gil, “Gagliardi y sus comentarios,” p. 275.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 277.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 277-278.

With this background, we look at what Gagliardi has to say on the practice of the examen.

7.1.1 The Daily Exercise

According to Gagliardi, the three types of examen that Ignatius proposes – general, particular and daily – are not to be limited to the areas that Ignatius indicate, but should be extended to whole life. With regard to the general examen Gagliardi says that it should be done not just for mortal sins, but apply to correct each and every vice. Such an examination is to be done once a month, based on the Decalogue. This would help persons to recognize mistakes – based on one’s state of life – and then to correct them. And in such a process, a detailed general confession, one or twice a year, is a must. With regard to the particular examen, Gagliardi insists that such practice is not just to correct defects in prayer, but to be applied to all the faults. Such examen is to be done every month or every week, again depending on the state of life, starting with the most prominent fault. The daily examen, according to Gagliardi, is to correct minor faults and this has to be done once or twice a day. He says, “ha de hacerse siempre una o dos veces al día, según se indica. Los que están avanzados en la vida espiritual, no necesitan detenerse demasiado minuciosamente en cosas mínimas, sino brevemente en las faltas principales que se han notado durante todo el día.”²¹² Gagliardi holds the opinion that this exercise is in the form of a prayer and the essence of which should be extended to other affective levels as well.

Gagliardi considers the examen as an exercise of perfection where two agents are involved:

el padre Ignacio ha escogido juiciosamente dos medios o instrumentos principales para procurar la salvación de las almas y su perfección: la oración y el examen. Y esto por justo título. Dos actores, en efecto, intervienen en una obra de tanta importancia: Dios, por su ayuda divina, y el hombre, por la cooperación de su libertad. La oración interviene al principio obteniendo la gracia de Dios; el examen conduce enseguida al hombre a su perfección por la reflexión sobre sus acciones cotidianas.²¹³

²¹² Ibid., p. 60.

²¹³ Achille Gagliardi, *Commentaire des exercices spirituels d'Ignace de Loyola (1590)*, (introduction par André Derville; traduction par Francis Joseph Legran), Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1996, 57. The Spanish translation is ours. (Thanks to Prof. Manuel Revuelta SJ).

For Gagliardi, the examen is a reflection making use of the intellect to correct or perfect one's actions. Such a reflection is possible under grace and nature, and such exercise is necessary to guide one's actions correctly.

Cuando un hombre, en efecto, se deja conducir en sus actos no solo por el instinto de la naturaleza o los sentidos, como hacen los seres insensibles y sin razón, sino por el conocimiento y la decisión, y sabe lo que hace, es decir por qué medios y para qué fin, la gracia divina, que perfecciona la naturaleza en lo que ella tiene de innato y propio, exige de él que obre no solo por gusto, instinto y primer impulso de esa gracia, sino incluso, con aquella madurez, luz y atención que convienen a quienes actúan con seriedad en todo lo que hacen.²¹⁴

Gagliardi considers that when adapted according to varied circumstances, such reflection sheds light to orient one's actions as well as to correct them.

In the actual practice of such examen, what is important is not to remain merely at a desire level, but to arrive at a free decision to execute them. In this practice Gagliardi gives importance to the grace of God and the divine light that enables such faithfulness.

Hay que ajustar, en fin, la luz con la que cada uno toma conciencia de sus pecados propios, faltas e imperfecciones, y las distingue de las buenas acciones, porque examinándolas y sometiénolas a la norma de los preceptos, llegara a la experiencia práctica de la enmienda, [...]. Esta luz debe ser clara, a fin de que el hombre no oculte ni disimule ni excuse o disminuya sus errores, ni tampoco los aumente por escrúpulos, pusilanimidad o apatía. Por el contrario, debe descubrirlos con sinceridad, fidelidad y claridad, sin oscurecerlos con las tinieblas del amor propio.²¹⁵

Gagliardi considers this divine light as an important element in reaching the perfection, “porque ella vence todas las asechanzas del demonio, purifica el espíritu, quita los obstáculos, hace al hombre humilde, prudente y dispuesto a recibir todos los dones eclesiales. Es la clave que abre el acceso a todo bien; trae consigo una paz de espíritu sólida y profunda; finalmente sin ella golpeamos en el vacío.”²¹⁶

Gagliardi opines that the examen becomes the best means to gain such divine light when it is coupled with other prayers and discernment. The uniqueness of Gagliardi's

²¹⁴ Ibid., p. 58.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 59.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

teaching is that he combines the examen with practice of discernment. He believed that it is the practice of discernment that makes the Ignatian precepts of thoughts, words, etc. indeed practical.

Para hacer descender estos preceptos a la práctica, es necesario hacer discernimiento de espíritus: “se puede reconocer - escribe el P. Ignacio - que en el hombre se dan tres clases de pensamientos: uno nace del movimiento propio del hombre mismo, os otros dos vienen de fuera, es decir inspirados por el bueno o mal espíritu.” Por tanto, si el hombre no se examina a sí mismo, no podrá distinguir las malas acciones, de las buenas a fin de enmendar aquellas y orientar estas en busca de su perfección.²¹⁷

Thus, for Gagliardi, the examen is a prayer that is practical and has to be used in day-to-day life. When one applies the principles of discernment, this prayer becomes a true exercise to distinguish different movements of spirits.

7.2 Observations

The first thing we notice about Gagliardi’s commentary on the examen is its adaptability, i.e. the flexibility of this exercise to suit life situations. For him, this exercise is a practical way to discover the errors, the vices and self-love that may be hidden in the person. He considers the examen as a practical way to execute the desire for perfection, which is done in freedom. Though Gagliardi does not elaborate the five-steps of the examen, he makes it clear that asking for light is crucial in this exercise. As we have seen, Gagliardi prescribes making of general confession in more than one occasion. However, the focal point of the daily examen is not its moralistic aspect; the daily examen is not a meticulous review of one’s sins. On the contrary, Gagliardi recommends the practice of the examen in close relation to discernment of spirits – the one who examines himself/herself, can better discern the action. Therefore, we categorize what Gagliardi talks as a spiritual examen.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 58.

8 Luis de la Palma and the *Camino espiritual*

Luis de la Palma was born in 1559/1560²¹⁸ in Toledo in Spain, in a family of 10 siblings. After completion of studies in Arts, La Palma entered the novitiate at Alcalá de Henares on 19 May 1575. Luis de la Palma was ordained a priest in 1584 and pronounced the final vows on 2 February, 1595, in his home town.²¹⁹ Two of his brothers were also Jesuits.²²⁰ For a short while La Palma taught philosophy and theology in Murcia, but he left his mark as superior and provincial in the years that followed. He was provincial of Toledo twice, 1614-1617 and 1624-1627 and novice master from 1600-1607. He was the rector of the Colegio Imperial, Casa profesa de Madrid, Alcalá de Henares, etc. La Palma was an important figure of his time – he had deep knowledge of the *Spiritual Exercises* well-versed in ecclesial matters and a renowned preacher.²²¹ He attended the 7th GC, after which the General Vitelleschi entrusted him with many important responsibilities in the Society.²²² Among the many ascetical works, *Historia de la sagrada pasión* and *Camino espiritual* are the best-known works of La Palma, and he is acclaimed as one of the first Spanish ascetical writers.²²³

²¹⁸ There is lack of clarity on the exact year of the birth of La Palma, some sources are of the opinion that he was born in 1559 (*DHCJ*, p. 2960; Sommervogel 6: 150). There are others, who think that Palma was born in 1560. See Luis de la Palma, *Obras del Padre Luis de la Palma* (introducción, estudio y notas de Francisco X. Rodríguez Molero), Madrid: BAC, 1967, p. 3. Sommervogel 6:150-155. In the necrology of Francisco Aguado, the then provincial of Toledo, the reference is to ‘La Palma died at the age of 81 years’ and the date of this document is 21 April of 1615. See F. Cereceda, “Carta necrológica sobre el P. Luis de la Palma,” in *Manresa* 17 (1945) 155-161.

²¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

²²⁰ They were Esteban and Gabriel. Cf. Francisco X. Rodríguez Molero, “Palma, Luis de la,” in *DHCJ* vol. III, p. 2960.

²²¹ Luis Puiggrós, “Vía unitiva en los ejercicios según el P. Luis de la Palma,” in *Manresa* 1 (1926) pp. 3-20, here p. 3.

²²² He was entrusted with the delicate task of meditating, on behalf of the Society, with rules of his time as well as dealing with the Inquisition about the works of Juan de Mariana. See Rodríguez Molero, “Palma,” p. 2960.

²²³ See the comments in La Palma, *Obras del Padre*, p. xviii. “Luis de la Palma fue profundo, sobrio y elegante de estilo, sutil de ideas, magnífico de razonamientos, sólido de doctrina, de tierna devoción y fervorosos afectos. Y merece figurar entre los primeros escritores ascéticos españoles.”

8.1 Luis de la Palma and the Daily Examen

Luis de la Palma is said to be a spokesperson for the spirituality of the Society of Jesus of his time, and he did this with his work *Camino espiritual*, a commentary on the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius. The *Camino espiritual* offers the way to perfection while the *Historia de la Sagrada pasión* is a detailed reflection especially of the third week of the *Exercises* as an evangelical history, offering meditations for each day of the week.²²⁴ His works *Historia de la sagrada pasión*, *Camino espiritual*, *Práctica y breve declaración del camino espiritual* hold in high esteem Ignatian principles, and what La Palma talks about the examen comes within this context of such meditations or as way of perfection. Some scholars are of the opinion that all of his work can be considered under one title *Camino espiritual*, as discourses on the *Spiritual Exercises*,²²⁵ and so, then, what La Palma talks of the examen comes within this *Camino espiritual*, so to say. He deals with the practice of examen at two moments: the first in *Práctica y breve declaración del camino espiritual* which is in many ways a summary of the *Camino espiritual* and the second in *Tratado de los exámenes de conciencia*. Since these two have a different overall emphasis with regard to the way the examen is prescribed, we treat them separately here.

8.2 The Examen in *Práctica y breve declaración del camino espiritual*

Under the title *Práctica y breve declaración del camino espiritual* La Palma offers a summary of the whole of the *Spiritual Exercises*,²²⁶ organizing the whole exercises under

²²⁴ See La Palma, *Obras del Padre*, pp. 25ff.

²²⁵ Cf. La Palma, *Obras del Padre*, p. 25. “[*Camino espiritual*] es la obra de mayor amplitud y profundidad de La Palma. La *Historia de la Sagrada Pasión* en cierto modo puede considerarse como una parte del *Camino espiritual*. Pues éste pretende declarar las jornadas y pasos de la vía de la perfección, según los enseña San Ignacio en el libro de los *Ejercicios*, y la *Historia de la Sagrada Pasión* suministra las meditaciones para una de dichas jornadas, la tercera semana.”

²²⁶ The dedication of the work to the General reads, “este pequeño tratado, que ahora sale a luz, en que se contiene una breve práctica y declaración de las cuatro semanas de los *Ejercicios espirituales*, es parte del primer tomo; que publiqué los años pasados, desta misma materia. Porque como en él no se pudo declarar todo el libro de los *Ejercicios*, y apenas se declaró más que las veinte anotaciones primeras, me pareció entonces juntar con él esta breve Suma, de que se pudiesen aprovechar, particularmente nuestros Padres y Hermanos, los días que se recogen cada año a hacer los *Ejercicios*. Y por esta causa repartí en ocho días todas las cuatro semanas, con ocho meditaciones tomadas de la materia de las mismas cuatro semanas, y ocho pláticas o instrucciones en que se declara el fruto que se ha de sacar dellas, y la forma que se debe guardar en los *Ejercicios* que se practican en ellas.” La Palma, *Obras del Padre*, p. 839.

8 days so as to be profitable for those who make the annual retreat. This work contains exhortations or instructions and various meditations from the four weeks of the *Exercises*,²²⁷ within which the examen is presented as a way to reach perfection. Among the eight days that are marked for the retreat, the second day is dedicated to the general examen. We can gauge the importance La Palma gives to the practice of the examen when he says “el examen general es un ejercicio de tanta importancia, que apenas hay otro en que el demonio ponga tantos estorbos, si no es, por ventura, en el examen particular, por la misma razón; y así se debe poner todo esfuerzo en reformar este ejercicio y hacerle con cuidado.”²²⁸

For La Palma, the examen is to be made just as it is given by Ignatius in the *Spiritual Exercises* [43], and there are two main goals of doing this exercise in a retreat: “los fines y frutos de este ejercicio son los dos que están en el título de él: *Examen general de conciencia para limpiarse y para mejor confesar. El primer fin* la puridad, [...]. *El segundo fin* es la confesión de los pecados, la cual, para que se haga con provecho, debe ser clara, y entera, hecha con dolor y propósito de la enmienda.”²²⁹ By placing the examen before the Meditation on Sin, La Palma gives importance to the purifying aspect of this examen.

La Palma further explains that purity is attained in three ways: by knowing the roots from within and cutting it off, knowing the occasions of sins and by feeling sorrow and subsequent resolution. La Palma vouches for the effectiveness of the examen in getting rid of the sins when he says:

todo ello se alcanza con el examen. Lo primero, conocer las raíces, advirtiendo, en qué géneros de faltas se cae de ordinario y más frecuentemente; lo cual no puede conocer el que no se examina; así como el que está de ordinario, fuera de su casa no puede ver los

²²⁷ La Palma compares this work to a building, offering all that is within this in a summary form: “en este caso solemos usar de un remedio, y es, hacer *una planta* de todo el edificio, que, dibujada en una pequeña tabla o papel, se entiende más fácilmente, y se comprende mejor; [...] conviene a saber, poner en poco papel una como planta de todo el edificio espiritual, desde su principio y fundamento hasta lo más perfecto de la vía unitiva; para que, entendiendo por ella toda la traza deste edificio, [...]” Ibid., p. 841. “Para ayudar a los nuestros en este intento, recogí los años pasados la Suma de todas las cuatro semanas, a ocho días de ejercicios; conviene a saber, a ocho pláticas o instrucciones, en que se comprehende toda la traza y el intento principal deste libro, con una sumaria declaración de todos los modos de ejercitarse que hay en él, y ocho meditaciones, tomadas de la materia de todas cuatro semanas.” Ibid., p. 842.

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 855.

²²⁹ Ibid.

desórdenes que pasan en ella, ni saber la raíz y principios de ellos. Lo segundo, se conocen también con el examen las ocasiones externas para quitarlas. Así, como el que tropieza en una piedra y cae, si no hace reflexión y repara en donde tropezó, nunca quita el tropiezo y cae muchas veces en él; así es del que, por medio del examen, no hace reflexión de las ocasiones que tiene para caer o para faltar, que nunca, las quita ni sabe desviarse de ellas; y así, cae otras muchas veces en ellas. Lo tercero, el dolor y propósito de la enmienda pertenecen al cuarto y quinto puntos del examen.²³⁰

According to La Palma, the practice of the general examen is of great importance during the retreat because this exercise helps in recognizing one's sinfulness and to feel abhorrence.

Since realization of one's sinfulness is important La Palma recommends that the confession be meticulous, preceded by a good examination of conscience. He argues,

el segundo fin es la confesión de los pecados, la cual, para que se haga con provecho, debe ser clara, y entera, hecha con dolor y propósito de la enmienda. Para la entereza de la confesión ayuda el tercero punto del examen; porque, haciendo memoria en él de los pecados de cada día, es más fácil tenerla de todos al tiempo de la confesión. Y aunque es verdad que no hay obligación de confesar los pecados veniales; pero, ya que los confesamos para la mayor pureza del alma y provecho espiritual, por la misma causa y razón los debemos examinar.²³¹

By insisting on a meticulous preparation and confession of even venial sins, La Palma proposes the examen prior to the confession, as an effective exercise in spiritual growth.

Though La Palma talks here of the general examen, it assumes importance in our study of the daily examen, since he recommends this examen to be done not just for confession, but more for self-awareness – an awareness of the roots of sin in oneself: “este género de examen que se ha de hacer en la oración para el propio conocimiento, no ha de ser como el que [se] hace para la confesión, sino más semejante al que se hace para dar la cuenta de la conciencia, advirtiendo en las faltas y tentaciones ordinarias, para sacar la raíz de las virtudes y aprovechamiento espiritual.”²³²

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Ibid., pp. 855-856.

²³² Ibid., p. 856.

8.3 The Examen and *Tratado del examen de la conciencia*²³³

In his treatises on the examen *Tratado del examen* La Palma deals in detail with the advantages and the ways of practicing the daily examen. The *Tratado* is divided into two parts – daily examen and particular examen.²³⁴ La Palma considers the examen as a way to correct the faults of one’s daily life:

porque no basta borrar los pecados pasados por medio de la confesión, sino que es menester corregir los vicios de la vida presente, por esto se ha de emplear a sus tiempos el examen diario de sí mismo. Llámase este examen general, porque se extiende a todas las acciones del hombre, aunque se limite al espacio de un solo día. En qué consiste, cuánta es su necesidad, y cuánta su utilidad, con varias semejanzas nos lo dejaron inculcado los santos Padres.²³⁵

Drawing abundantly from the great works of the Desert Fathers and other mystics,²³⁶ La Palma presents the examen as a remedy to cure the maladies of the soul and equates it with cultivation of garden where the thorns have to be removed in order to cultivate virtues. La Palma presents the utility of the examen as follows: “pero borrar los pecados con el arrepentimiento y preservarse de recaer en ellos, es solo la parte negativa de la santidad y de la utilidad del examen; la positiva consiste en el fomento y cultivo de las virtudes, pues también se examinan las obras buenas, para acrecentarlas en número y en perfección siempre más y más”²³⁷ as well as “y para que saquemos fruto del examen, que no consiste en el conocimiento sino en la enmienda de los pecados.”²³⁸

²³³ This work was originally written in Spanish by La Palma, before his death in 1641, but was published in Latin in 1700. Due to the popularity it enjoyed, by 1887 this book had, other than Latin, Flemish, English and French editions. The Spanish translation of this scholarly worked was first published only in 1903, since the original manuscript was lost. See Luis de la Palma, *Breve Extracto del Tratado de los exámenes de conciencia*, Barcelona: Tip. Católica Casals, 1948, pp. 5-6; Luis de la Palma, *Tratado del examen de la conciencia de la manera que lo enseña el bienaventurado padre san Ignacio en su libro de los ejercicios* (traducción de José María Soler e índice analítico de Santiago Rodríguez), Barcelona: Subirana Hermanos, 1903.

²³⁴ Out of the near 400-pages, almost 250 are dedicated for the general examen, and this is in fact the daily examen, because La Palma talks of the nature and use of the examen as one that extends to the activities of one full day or half-day depending on when the examen is made.

²³⁵ La Palma, *Tratado del examen*, p. 17.

²³⁶ In his work of nearly 400 pages dedicated to the examens La Palma cites from many Fathers of the Church, mystics and monks like John Cassian, St. Ephrem, St. Gregory, Chrysostom, Bonaventure, Origen, St. Basil, Tertullian, John Climacus, St. Isidore, St. Paul, Pope Leo, Thomas Aquinas, etc.

²³⁷ La Palma, *Breve extracto*, pp. 11-12.

²³⁸ La Palma, *Tratado del examen*, pp. 19-20.

8.3.1 The Steps of the Daily Examen

Though La Palma follows the same five steps of the examen and in the same order as prescribed by Ignatius what draws attention is the enormous details that he provides on the second and third steps of this exercise, especially pointing out the importance of examining well the whole sequence of thoughts. We take a look at each point in the following pages.

8.3.1.1 The First Point: Thanking God

Presenting thanksgiving as the first point, La Palma emphasizes the importance of gratitude, “en primer lugar, dar gracias por los beneficios recibidos es cosa de rigurosa obligación y en sacrificio de alabanza con que es honrado el divino bienhechor; en segundo lugar, dispone para recibir nuevos y mayores beneficios de la mano del Señor.”²³⁹ Among the many reasons for beginning this exercise with gratitude, La Palma presents the importance of thanksgiving in the scripture.²⁴⁰ He is of the opinion that gratitude is like the composition of place in which the whole exercise begins. For La Palma, gratitude is one of the most important prayers and hence should be the first step of this important exercise; he believes that it can be practiced at all times, whereas the other exercises may not always be practiced with the same frequency.²⁴¹

8.3.1.2 Grace to Know the Sins

La Palma terms the second step as very important because, according to him, knowing one’s sins is of utmost importance, without knowing the sins one cannot reject them. We have already seen that he compares the first two steps of the examen to that of

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 27.

²⁴⁰ He says that it was highly recommended by the saints, has a central place in the psalms and St. Paul recommended it, “porque es cierto que la falta de gratitud a Dios nos priva de la abundancia de sus dones, por esto el darle las gracias por los ya recibidos es cosa muy recomendada por los santos [...]” See La Palma, *Breve extracto*, p. 13.

²⁴¹ “Y aunque en las meditaciones ha señalado varios lugares para esta obligación, mayormente en los coloquios, sin embargo colocó fijamente este deber en el mismo principio del examen, como en el sitio más seguro. Porque los demás ejercicios ni son para todos, y en todo tiempo. [...] ninguno puede juzgarse por de tanto peso, que quite el tiempo al examen.” Ibid., pp. 27-28.

the meditation where the preparatory prayer and the composition of the place prepares a person for prayer before asking for the grace.

La Palma reasons out that God's grace is much more necessary because knowing of one's sins often becomes difficult: "tres cosas, pues hacen difícil este conocimiento, la primera proviene de parte del entendimiento, la segunda de parte de la voluntad, la tercera de parte de los sentidos disipados."²⁴² He calls such knowing difficult because the defect may be very small or there may not be enough divine light to see them and hence to really know the vices an illumination is indeed necessary.²⁴³ The difficulty in knowing, then, is reason enough to ask for divine grace.

La Palma terms self-love as the gravest impediment with regard to will, and it usually tends to conceal the defects and protect the person from any harm. The mastery of La Palma is seen when he points out that human will is capable of resisting so much, leading to concealing of defects.²⁴⁴ La Palma talks about the importance of persevering in this exercise saying "pero la perseverancia de un diligente examen acompañada de la luz de la divina gracia, poco a poco logra que los pecados se conozcan y detesten."²⁴⁵

8.3.1.3 Inquisition of the Sins

The third point of the examen is termed as an inquisition, clearly pointing to what is expected of in this step, and La Palma terms it as the body and substance of the whole exercise. Since the greatest usefulness of the examen is to know clearly the thoughts in order to distinguish one's own thoughts from the ones coming from outside, he considers such inquiry very important.

²⁴² Ibid., p. 34.

²⁴³ For the various reasons that he points out see *ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

²⁴⁴ "Del parte de la voluntad, gravísimo impedimento es el amor propio. Porque éste procura encubrir los defectos y excusarlos, cuando debería el hombre sacarlos a luz y acusarse de ellos. No gusta el amor propio que se conozca lo que le es contrario, ni que se advierta en lo que es repugnante a la naturaleza [...]. La molestia y lo sutil de la materia, la repugnancia del amor propio, la libertad de los sentidos, acostumbrados a fijarse en todo menos en sí mismos, obscurecen la mente en tanto grado, que casi la dejan ciega." *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

However, La Palma points out, in such an inquisition there could be difficulties in knowing one's sins and he lists three reasons and they are lack of light, self-love, and distraction.²⁴⁶ Other than these three difficulties, La Palma also lists two impediments, one of excess and the other of too little:

el impedimento por defecto es de aquellos, que realmente no se examinan, ya porque no han establecido un tiempo determinado o fijo para este ejercicio; ya porque el tiempo que fijaron lo gastan en otros ejercicios de piedad o en pensamientos de otro género. No se sienten estimulados a examinarse porque nada encuentran; siendo no obstante cierto que nada encuentran, porque no buscan. Otros, que pecan del vicio contrario por exceso, se entregan totalmente a este trabajo, y con demasiada ansiedad y excesiva turbación del ánimo van reconociendo todas sus cosas.²⁴⁷

Since these impediments are of importance in the practice of the examen we look at them in detail below.

8.3.1.3.1 Impediments of Defect and Excess

La Palma recommends a thorough inquisition and he maintains that if the examen is not done properly there is possibility of imaginary sins and of scrupulosity. He observes, “uno y otro defecto nace de una sola e idéntica fuente, del amor propio. Los primeros por amor de sí mismo evitan la vista de sus pecados; los últimos por el mismo principio tienen horror a los castigos de sus culpas, y para evitarlos, son heridos de temor donde no hay ningún temor; y escudriñan lo más recóndito para hallar faltas donde no las hay.”²⁴⁸ Affirming that the source of both these impediments is self-love, La Palma proposes the solution of rigorous examen just as Ignatius outlined in the *Spiritual Exercises*: asking for an account of the soul, hour by hour on each thoughts, words and deeds, from the moment of rising.

²⁴⁶ “Primera, la falta de luz, que se requiere en el entendimiento, para que cada uno se imponga una norma recta o ley y regla fija de obrar. Segunda, el amor propio, que impide que demos a nuestras culpas el peso y gravedad que en sí tienen. Tercera, la distracción de los sentidos que no deja libre la atención y divierte la memoria a otras cosas, de donde nace que huya el hombre de mirar lo que pasa en su interior, y ande vagando fuera de sí.” Ibid., p. 39.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 39.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 39-40.

La Palma emphasises the importance of making a resolution and then examining one's conscience based on such resolution, saying “según es nuestro propósito, así será también nuestro aprovechamiento.” He argues

el propósito que nos formamos es nuestra ley y nuestra regla; y cuándo este propósito fuere más perfecto, tanto serán necesariamente más perfectas nuestras acciones, tenido que ser conformes a esta ley. El que nada propone, nada hallará que examinar; el que propone cosas más perfectas, descubrirá en el examen defectos más menudos [...]. De suerte que el examen no es más que medir las obras del día con los propósitos de la mañana, según la regla que se había fijado de antemano. Sí por la mañana no propusimos más que evitar los pecados mortales, no hallará el examen más pecados que los mortales; pero si además proponemos evitar tales y tales veniales, de estos también nos acusará la conciencia en el examen. Lo mismo se puede decir de las imperfecciones por pequeñas que sean.²⁴⁹

Following the same line of arguments La Palma insists that the resolution should be according to the type and nature of defects to be corrected – be it some major vices or minor imperfections. Thus the suggestion of La Palma is “el que se propone, pues, al mediodía, o a la noche tomarse cuenta de su proceder, determine bien al principiar del día el propósito, e impóngaselo a sí mismo como ley acomodada y fija.”²⁵⁰

As already note, when self-love is the source of both these impediments there is the danger of self-deception in knowing oneself, hence “por culpa de este amor propio acontece con mucha frecuencia, que cuando en el secreto de nuestro corazón nos acusamos, juntamente también nos excusamos; cuando nos castigamos, al mismo tiempo nos lisonjamos hasta en los defectos claramente conocidos y penetrados.”²⁵¹ For La Palma the deception is due to the affections of person which are not corrected; when affections are not corrected they are hidden, giving the person an illusion that there really exists no inappropriate affection.

Insisting that a spirited fight by employing contrary virtues of the vice – here humility and meekness against self-love – is the way to assure victory.

²⁴⁹ La Palma, *Tratado del examen*, pp. 42-43.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

Apenas con fervor hayas empezado esta obra, al instante experimentarás, y como tocarás con la mano, la fuerza de tus vicios y siniestros malos; mientras faltaba este combate, parecían adormecidos y como muertos, y por esto no se dejaban ver ni sentir; ahora se ven y se sienten. Experimentamos el ímpetu de los vicios, cuando resistimos a sus exigencias; porque el que lucha percibe cualquier tropiezo y cualquier herida por pequeña que sea; el que no lucha, cae y es herido sin notarlo.²⁵²

When self-love is present we fail to notice the vices in us, when we win over this self-love we make progress in knowledge of ourselves.²⁵³ In order to combat the distractions in thought, La Palma suggests organizing the day well, assigning each hour with things to be done so that later when examining it is easy to see if one has been faithful to such order.

On the other hand, points out La Palma, those combating the temptation to examen every minute detail should consider that it is not the aim of the examen to find out every bit of fault, but it is allowing God's light to illumine one's life. this second category of people tend to believe in examining every little thing and subsequently be plagued by scruples. But La Palma points out

engañanse; se han de examinar las culpas de buena fe, y solo las que podemos conocer sin aquellas agitaciones y tempestades del ánimo, y toda la eficacia del examen se ha de poner en el dolor y propósito de las culpas descubiertas. Porque el conocimiento y enmienda de estas se origina en el alma nueva luz, por la cual aquellas mismas manchas escondidas y otras más pequeñas vienen a descubrirse.²⁵⁴

Since there is always the problem of examining too much or too little La Palma proposes some aspects to be kept in mind while doing the examen: examen on fixed points/areas; the resolution should be specific and a particular one; limit the time of the examen, i.e. make a boundary (from morning till noon, or so many hours of the day, etc.); when one fails to keep the resolution, instead of crying over it, asking pardon; looking for faults only that can be found easily.²⁵⁵

²⁵² Ibid., p. 45.

²⁵³ When La Palma says 'when one is fighting a particular vice, any slight injury or a harm is noted, but the one who is not fighting is perfect because he never notices anything,' he highlights the complexity involved in such knowing. The contrast between the two types of people is shown by saying when the door is open anybody can enter the house, but when it is closed the permission of the owner is needed to enter the household.'

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 48.

²⁵⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 51-53.

8.3.1.4 To Beg Pardon for the Sins

For La Palma, the first three points of the examen are oriented to the fourth and fifth points, namely asking pardon for sins and the resolve not to commit them again. As we have already said, the purpose of knowing sins is to have remorse and then to amend them after cleansing the conscience. He reminds that one cannot go on living in the First Week, but needs to go on into the subsequent stages since remorse and amendment are two important steps in spiritual progress. The author considers compunction as the most important aspect of the fourth step of the examen and for him there is nothing more opposing as a stubborn-hard heart for compunction. La Palma calls compunction “al dolor sensible que aflige el corazón, tomado el vocablo de aquel que es herido con un punzón.” He proposes remedy to counter such excess of luxury and material things.²⁵⁶

La Palma identifies two reasons by which compunction is experienced: one as fear of God and the other as love for God:

el primero es de temor, por la muchedumbre y gravedad de los pecados y consideración de sus pecados, y este es propio de los que empiezan. El segundo es el amor, por el deseo de complacer a Dios por sí mismo y por los beneficios recibidos de su mano. Cuando ese amor se enciende, prorrumpe en inflamados deseos de ver a Dios, y de unirse con el sumo bien con los lazos indisolubles de la eterna caridad, y esta compunción es propia de los perfectos.²⁵⁷

Compunction rising out of fear of sin or of eternal damnation is easily experienced by people. In people who are more perfect, compunction rising out of love, and usually it springs from sins of the past because of the memory of having offended God or causing any harm to one’s neighbour.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ He proposes practices which are contrary to this attachment – adversities in life, corporal punishment and abstinence from things that give pleasure. La Palma talks of the misfortunes chastening our desires; corporal punishment which inflict pain in order to arouse sorrow in the soul; and practice of the 8th addition that Ignatius proposes in the first week. See *ibid.*, pp. 65-67.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁵⁸ La Palma also talks of another pain, one that comes out of true charity – pain for the sins and offences of one’s neighbour. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 78.

8.3.1.5 Amendment

La Palma calls the fifth point as the soul of the examen, because without the resolution to change there will be no life in the examen. “Que los cuatro puntos refieren al quinto, como al alma del examen, sin el cual lo demás no tienen vida. [...] todo el fruto del examen, grande por cierto, consiste en el dolor y propósito de la enmienda” and “enmienda en dos cosas: primera, que hemos de procurar conocer no sólo las raíces de las culpas internas para arrancarlas, sino también las ocasiones de ellas, si hay algunas exteriores, para quitarlas; pues de estas dos cosas depende el efecto de la enmienda que proponemos.”²⁵⁹ He observes that greater the pain and compunction one experiences, more the chance for spiritual benefits.

El que tiene esta disposición fácilmente se moverá a contrición de sus culpas; y cuanto mayor fuere dolor, tanto más firme será el propósito de la enmienda, o sea el último punto del examen y aun su fruto principal, puesto que sin él todos los demás puntos vienen a ser inútiles. Y en efecto, ¿a qué pedir en el segundo punto gracia de conocer los pecados, sino para que corrijan? ¿A qué examinar en el tercero los pensamientos, palabras y obras, de hora en hora, sino para lo mismo? ¿A qué en el cuarto punto, dolernos sería y verdaderamente de los pecados, sino para que los pecados no se repitan?²⁶⁰

Thus, we can see that La Palma reiterates the importance of resolution in the practice of the examen: all the points of the examen are geared towards recognition and removal of sins. In this way “la memoria de los beneficios divinos y la acción de gracias, que practicamos en el primer punto se encamina a que, comparando nuestra ingratitud con estos inmensos beneficios, se acreciente el dolor; más el dolor no es verdadero sí no va con él unido el propósito de la enmienda, al cual nos lleva el punto quinto.”²⁶¹

Having looked at the steps of the examen, we turn our attention to the subject matter and the complexity involved in analysing them.

²⁵⁹ La Palma, *Tratado del examen*, pp. 84-85.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

8.3.2 Material for the Examen and Complexity of Thoughts

La Palma in his detailed analysis of the whole process of examining one's thoughts, words and deeds rightly points out that examining one's thoughts is crucial in this whole exercise; examining one's words and deeds is rather easy but not thoughts since there is lack of clarity and thought is not under the control of the will. While La Palma's profound analysis helps us better grasp the complexity involved, it also helps us appreciate the type of examen he proposes. We would like to divide this whole analysis based on three criteria namely, sources of thought, the culpability and the state of the examiner.

8.3.2.1 Sources of Thoughts

Though La Palma talks of the three-fold source of thoughts – one's own, from good spirit and from evil spirit – he does not propose that it would be easy to analyse them. There are two movements that propels a person, just like in a clock there is an external movement and an internal movement. There are external acts which are clear, but the internal movements – which are more important – are often obscure and complex. La Palma calls the examen of thoughts as “difícil y obscuro”: “obscuro porque versa sobre actos interiores y ocultos, que no están al alcance de los sentidos, como lo está en general las palabras y las obras; y difícil, porque los pensamientos no están sujetos al imperio de la voluntad, como las palabras y obras.”²⁶² Further pointing out the complexity involved in analysing the whole thought process, La Palma says

porque siendo los pensamientos, por una parte rebeldes al imperio de la voluntad, y por otra incentivo del bien y del mal, fuente y origen de la libertad, y por tanto base de toda bondad y malicia de los actos internos; en un mismo y solo hombre, a manera de un reloj, somos impulsados por dos movimientos: externo uno, que señala la horas por medio de la aguja, se manifiesta claramente; interno el otro y oculto, que mueve las ruedas, y de cuya buena dirección depende el movimiento bien ordenado, que aparece al exterior. De un modo semejante hay en el hombre acciones exteriores, claras y manifiestas, como son las palabras y las obras, cuyo examen es fácil para descubrir su bondad y malicia; pero dentro del hombre está oculta la principal máquina y artificio de este reloj, y escondidas las ruedas de los pensamientos y consentimientos, por las cuales se dirigen todas las acciones exteriores. Por donde el que desea disponer rectamente sus acciones exteriores,

²⁶² Ibid., pp. 103-104.

es menester que ponga todo su cuidado en ordenar debidamente los pensamientos y afectos ocultos en su interior.²⁶³

Such a difficulty in understanding the thought process can be solved by identifying their source and then try to see where they lead.

La Palma elaborates what Ignatius called the different sources of thoughts based on their causes and what effect they leave on understanding.²⁶⁴ He compares the thoughts that come from oneself to the presence or absence of grace, and he says, “hay que notar aquí, que puede llamarse pensamiento nuestro, el que excitamos por nosotros mismos con las fuerzas de nuestro libre albedrío sin el auxilio de la gracia sobrenatural.”²⁶⁵ This is contrasted with thoughts that arise from one’s own thought process after having allowed through the senses and mixed with imaginations. He opines that one needs grace of God to understand the thoughts coming from outside.²⁶⁶

Making a clear distinction between thoughts based on their origin, La Palma says that out of the three sources of thoughts, mine own or from my own spirit has more resources, and so it resists longer than the other two, that is to say, the thoughts that originate in my own capacity do more harm than the ones that come from outside of me.²⁶⁷ La Palma is of the opinion that our own temptations sort of gain a ‘kinetic energy’ in long run.²⁶⁸ Therefore, a clear analysis requires great clarity with regard to the source of thoughts.

²⁶³ Ibid., pp. 105-106.

²⁶⁴ “Pero nótese que no se trata aquí del principio físico o causa eficiente de nuestro pensamiento; pues esta no puede ser otra que el entendimiento [...]. Cuando decimos, pues, que algunos pensamientos nos vienen de fuera, hablamos de la causa que mueve e instiga para que los admitamos, y como que los arroja a nuestro entendimiento. Uno es el pensamiento que yo mismo me forjo por el propio discurso, otro el que otro me propone, aunque el uno y el otro sea yo mismo quien lo percibo. [...] porque aunque sea de este que la propone, se dice sin embargo que no es de este, porque otro se la ha impreso en su entendimiento y en sus labios.” Ibid., pp. 108-109.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 113.

²⁶⁶ See Ibid., p. 109. “Por pensamientos que vienen de fuera entendemos solamente los que vienen del espíritu malo o del bueno. Y estos espíritus, por causas ocultas y puestas fuera del alcance de los sentidos, para conocerlos y examinarlos tienen necesidad de discreción y de la luz peculiar.” See also p. 120 where he talks of the need for discerning the thoughts.

²⁶⁷ See Ibid., pp. 111-112.

²⁶⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 125.

8.3.2.1.1 Need for Discernment

After having identified the source of thoughts, La Palma emphasizes the need to discern well such thoughts, and he insists that the grace of God, a divine light, is absolute necessity in this process. Pointing out that most often the thoughts originate in us – ones that we force with our own capacity, La Palma talks of the whole process of analysing with the help of the rules of discernment²⁶⁹ in clearly understanding them.

Sin embargo, no basta para discernir de una parte al espíritu propio, y de otra al espíritu bueno o malo. Porque los pensamientos del espíritu propio unas veces representan una cosa buena, a la manera del espíritu bueno; otras veces una cosa mala, como el espíritu malo. Otra señal, o sea otra regla es necesaria: y esta se toma, primero del modo como la cosa se propone; segundo, del afecto y disposición que deja en el alma.²⁷⁰

La Palma, like others, agrees that prudence is indeed needed in examining the real source of thoughts.

La Palma gives importance to the distinction between thoughts that produce an effect in us from the ones that do not when he says “ante todo se ha de advertir, que aquí no se trata de los pensamientos malos en general, sino sólo de aquellos que son capaces de mérito o de falta, de virtud o de vicio, o sea, de los objetivamente malos. Porque estos son los que ofrecen al examen [...]”²⁷¹ Thus, we see that La Palma gives great importance to the analysis of the source of thoughts and classifying them correctly in the complex process of examining the conscience.

8.3.2.2 Culpability

The second category that La Palma proposes in his analysis is culpability and this contributes much in marking clearly venial sin from mortal sin. La Palma offers the difference in mortal and venial sin, but insists that the examen should cover not only the

²⁶⁹ In the chapters XII and XIII La Palma offers a detailed analysis, using the rules of discernment, showing how to differentiate between thoughts coming from good spirit or from evil spirit. See *ibid.*, pp. 111ff.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p., 130.

mortal but also the venial sins, especially for those who want perfection.²⁷² In his opinion those who are beginners in spiritual life should focus on the mortal sin, and the ones who desire perfection should examine all the details. Because, when the minor sins are neglected, they breed bigger ones: “las tentaciones graves suelen ser para estos de menor peligro, porque emplean entonces atención y cautela; y de mayor peligro son las ligeras por el descuido, y entre tanto sufren los dientes del que mata las almas.”²⁷³ The second category of culpability is based on the delectation and he points out that since one moves from mere suggestion of thoughts to active cooperation there is greater culpability. And in the third grade where the culpability is the most because of one’s active involvement, the sins are easily recognized.

For La Palma, the difference in the culpability is also important, so that the examen becomes a true exercise of perfection.

Que los pecados veniales, y aun las mismas imperfecciones de nuestras obras se han de sujetar al examen cada día, cuanto lo permite la luz que Dios comunica y el fervor de nuestro espíritu, [...]. Estos son, pues, los deberes de este examen: inquirir esas culpas, arrepentirse y proponer su enmienda con la satisfacción. Consta, de consiguiente, que hay que examinar cada día las culpas ligeras y veniales. Sean ellas frecuentes, sean pequeñas, por esto tenemos necesidad de mayor atención y fervor que en el examen de las más graves.²⁷⁴

From this it is clear that La Palma insists on the importance of the examen based on one’s state of perfection, and he advocates a thorough examen for those growing in virtue and for the perfect.²⁷⁵

La Palma offers a further division between examining the virtues and examining the spiritual activities and says,

²⁷² La Palma provides a long list of possible venial sins and they are “pensamiento ocioso, palabras ociosas, obras ociosas, pensamientos vanos y soberbios, palabras jactanciosas, obras ambiciosas, pensamientos carnales, palabras deshonestas, obras de la carne, pensamientos que vienen del espíritu malo, palabras contra el prójimo, obras de venganza, acerca de los ejercicios espirituales” and so on. See *ibid.*, pp. 171ff.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 152-153.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

²⁷⁵ “Que a los que se ocupan en la pureza de la conciencia, y se afanan por adelantar en las virtudes, les es necesario el examen de las culpas ligeras, no hay necesidad de muchas palabras para declararlo, pues la misma cosa claramente lo indica.” *Ibid.*, p. 154.

acerca de los ejercicios espirituales: últimamente se han de examinar los pensamientos, que vienen del espíritu bueno, que en general mueven a mayor perfección. Hemos de examinar, pues, si hemos obedecido a las buenas inspiraciones, si hemos tenido negligencia en las penitencias y mortificación corporal, si hacemos debidamente los ejercicios espirituales, con qué exactitud observamos las adiciones e instrucciones del padre espiritual, las reglas y mandatos de los Superiores, cómo ejercitamos las virtudes, etc.²⁷⁶

This further shows the importance the author gives to the examen based on one's state of perfection.

8.3.3 The Fruits of the Examen

La Palma underlines two-fold benefit of this spiritual exercise: purity of conscience and confession. In his own words:

este fin se reduce a dos objetos. El primero es la limpieza de la conciencia, el segundo la confesión de los pecados; si bien estos objetos vienen a parar en lo mismo, pues la confesión sacramental se ha de contar entre los medios más eficaces de limpiar la conciencia [...]. Esta purificación de la conciencia consiste primeramente en obtener el perdón de las culpas, el cual conseguimos ya por el mismo examen, ya también por la confesión; en segundo lugar, en quitar las reliquias que aún quedan de los pecados ya perdonados. [...] cuando seriamente se convierte, se reconcilia con Dios, y perdonados los pecados se le restituye el estado de gracia; siente sin embargo que aún quedan dentro de sí reliquias del mal huésped, como son las inclinaciones aún peores, que el pecado engendró y la costumbre hizo crecer. Mas estas reliquias no se quitan con la culpa, sino que es necesaria una purificación muy repetida, y una lucha vigorosa y perseverante, para que limpie el alma de hábito vicioso y se adorne con las virtudes. Y esta limpieza se adquiere de ordinario con el examen particular.²⁷⁷

In this manner, a complete purification is possible through confession and a thorough examination of conscience.

As we have said already, La Palma insists on the necessary requirements: to know the sins and to reject them, and both of these are done in the examen: “porque siendo los pecados y defectos hijos de nuestra libre voluntad, [...] no basta simplemente conocer los pecados y defectos, sino que, después de conocidos, es necesario cuidado y trabajo para

²⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 178. Here he lists all the possible ways one can become perfect by examining in detail, even the spiritual activities.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., pp.179-180.

aborrecerlos y enmendarlos.”²⁷⁸ La Palma argues that the second step of the examen helps precisely to know the sins, and moreover, each of the five points of the examen are directed to the cleansing of sins. He says

para la limpieza del alma resulta de la enmienda de las culpas pasadas que la manchaban; que esta enmienda proviene del propósito firme y eficaz; el propósito, de la compunción y dolor, y la compunción, del conocimiento de los yerros pasados. Consta, pues, que el conocimiento de los pecados, el arrepentirse de ellos y el propósito de la enmienda, que son las partes principales del examen, son de maravillosa eficacia “para limpiar la conciencia,” que es uno de los fines que aquí nos proponemos. Para conseguir este fin, no basta un solo examen, sino que se ha de repetir muchas veces.²⁷⁹

The examen, then, leads to a complete purification after knowing the sins. By terming the examen as efficacious in spiritual life, La Palma lists other secondary fruits of the examen like indifference²⁸⁰ and a help in spiritual life.²⁸¹

Therefore, all that we have said so far, about the fruits of the practice of the examen can be summarized in the following way: “Pues se examinan los malos afectos del ánimo para mortificarlos, las tentaciones para vencerlas, los vicios para corregirlos, las virtudes para perfeccionarlas y los ejercicios espirituales para que día en día se hagan con más exactitud.”²⁸² While arguing that the confession is also a spiritual exercise, he talks of the

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 181.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 186-187.

²⁸⁰ He proposes the examen in order to assess the presence or absence of indifference. He argues that the Meditation on Two Standards, sense of poverty and account of conscience are also related to this exercise. Cf. *ibid.* pp. 191-193, 199-200.

²⁸¹ While pointing out that the purpose of the account of conscience, just like that of the examen, is to find out in what state one’s soul is, and he says about the difference between confession and account of conscience: “hagan los Superiores que los súbditos entiendan, que una cosa es dar cuenta de la conciencia, y otra confesarse generalmente; porque no solo hay regla diversa de una y otra cosa, sino que es diverso el fin, y diverso el modo. El fin de la confesión es, ponerse delante de los ojos las culpas de todo aquel tiempo, y extirparlas de nuevo con mayor fervor, y como revestirse de nuevas fuerzas; pero el fin de la cuenta de conciencia es descubrir el estado de su alma, o sea, sus defectos, pasiones, propensiones, tentaciones, virtudes y todo lo que puede servir para dar perfecto conocimiento de sí a aquel, a cuya dirección se confiaron a mayor gloria de Dios. El modo también es diverso; pues en la confesión, se han de declarar los pecados y sus circunstancias, mas en la cuenta de conciencia bastará decir lo que da enteramente a conocer el aprovechamiento o atraso del alma, y el estado del hombre interior.” *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 204.

fruits of it: sincere contrition, sorrow from the part of the will and better disposition to receive the blessed sacrament.²⁸³

La Palma says the things that are revealed in the daily examen are used as material for the particular examen and that the particular examen is precisely to stop the passions, to uproot the vices and to perfect the spiritual exercises. We take a look at this exercise now.

8.4 Luis de la Palma and the Particular Examen

For La Palma, the particular examen is an exercise to control the passions, to uproot the vices and to perfect the spiritual exercises, and as we have seen, the things that are revealed in the daily examen are made use as material for the particular examen.

Este examen de nuestro estado y aprovechamiento, recibe luz del examen general de cada día; porque de las culpas y defectos cotidianos, se vienen a descubrir las costumbres, las inclinaciones torcidas y las pasiones. Porque así como el pulso de la arteria manifiesta la enfermedad oculta, así también los pensamientos, las palabras y las obras de cada día indican la pasión oculta; y la mala pasión descubierta por estas señales, da materia al examen particular.²⁸⁴

He further clarifies on the need for particular examen saying, “hemos de dar vueltas y examinar diligentemente nuestros vicios, virtudes, pasiones, tentaciones, inclinaciones, hábitos, ocupaciones, y ejercicios espirituales; y habiéndolo mirado todo con atención, debemos aplicar el examen particular a la parte menos fortificada, y menos segura que las demás.”²⁸⁵ Like other writers, La Palma too points out that the subject of the particular examen be specific to remove the vice or to cultivate virtues.

Commenting on the purpose of the particular examen La Palma observes it must be focused on removal of specific vices. Crediting Ignatius of Loyola for this spiritual practice, La Palma terms spiritual fight as the very nature of particular examen, because, the subject

²⁸³ See *ibid.*, p. 210

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 207-208.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

matter of the examen is the concrete vice²⁸⁶ that does the maximum damage to a person or a contrary virtue.

8.4.1 Factors in the Particular Examen

La Palma in his treaty on the particular examen describes the material, formal, final and efficient causes of this spiritual practice. He describes the form of the examen this way: “el propósito de la mañana acerca de este vicio o de esta virtud, el cuidado especial durante el día de no caer el aquel defecto, o de ejercitar los actos que hemos determinado de la virtud contraria; y comparar los tiempos entre sí para conocer si ganamos o perdemos.”²⁸⁷ The efficient cause is any person who desires virtues and growth, while the goal of the examen is the removal of the particular vice or the cultivation of a virtue that is contrary to a vice, based on the subject matter one chooses.

Warning that the origin of all evil temptations is inconsistency, La Palma emphasizes the importance of making resolutions in this spiritual exercise. He points out that the usual pitfall in the practice of the particular examen “la primera es que el ánimo vive contento con una mediana virtud, sin querer aspirar a la cumbre de la perfección. La segunda es, que aunque el alma aspire a mayor perfección, desconfía de alcanzarla; el tercero es, que si bien está ansioso de la perfección y sin desconfiar de conseguirla, sin embargo no emplea a este objeto todos los medios, sino solo aquellos que son más suaves y gratos a su afecto.”²⁸⁸ Another temptation while on this spiritual fight is to focus on other easier things and being content with it: “realmente desean su perfección y no desconfían de alcanzarla, y sin embargo rehúsan esta lucha con los vicios, dándose a otras prácticas más

²⁸⁶ “Lo primero, porque con este ejercicio se atiende a arrancar faltas o plantar virtudes particulares, y en materia y con circunstancias particulares [...]. Y también porque, siendo la materia del examen particular una sola cosa y singular, está más recogida toda la fuerza del alma, y todo el cuidado y atención y siendo esta falta como raíz de otras muchas, cortando la raíz caen también las ramas. Y así, de todas maneras, la materia del examen particular es acomodada para traer los propósitos a la debida ejecución.” La Palma, *Obras del Padre*, p. 893.

²⁸⁷ La Palma, *Tratado del examen*, p. 234.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

tranquilas y suaves, como son oración, contemplación, actos de amor divino, y unión con Dios, entregados del todo a los más exquisito de la perfección cristiana.”²⁸⁹

8.4.2 The Form of the Particular Examen

The manner of doing this examen can be reduced to four points: “la forma o manera de este examen se reduce a cuatro puntos: primero, por la mañana, luego en levantándose, hacer el propósito acerca del vicio que perseguimos o de la virtud que deseamos. Segundo, durante el día andar con diligencia para cumplirlo. Tercero, examinar las faltas en que ha incurrido. Cuatro, conferir un tiempo con otro para conocer si ha adelantado o atrasado.”²⁹⁰ Let us look at each of these points separately.

8.4.2.1 Making Resolutions

Since the particular examen is a spiritual fight it is not enough just to wish what one wants, but is very important to make a resolution and La Palma insists “hay, pues, dificultad en el examen particular; porque declaramos guerra al vicio que sobre todos nos daña, y el primer paso de esta guerra es intimar una lucha singular a este enemigo, y a esta intimación llamamos propósito.”²⁹¹ La Palma bases himself on the Exercises to argue his point about the importance of resolution and is convinced that it is linked to desire.²⁹²

In this fight against the vices, it is important to form good resolutions because he says that the enemy is always ready to trick the person.²⁹³ La Palma proposes five requirements in making a good resolution. “El buen propósito para que sea provechoso, requiere: 1. Materia determinada, 2. Discreción, para que pueda ponerse en práctica, 3.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 246.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 249.

²⁹¹ Ibid., p. 251.

²⁹² He says about desire “porque el fin de la oración o meditación, según la práctica de nuestro santo Padre, es mover la voluntad, como se ve claro en todo el primer ejercicio de las tres potencias.” Ibid. with regard to firm decision he says “se llama propósito la firme determinación de la voluntad, y sobre todo, cuando se refiere a una cosa difícil, y cuya ejecución está sujeta a contradicción resistencia. En efecto, en las cosas fáciles basta querer, basta consentir, para que la cosa se haga por sí misma; pero en las difíciles no basta solo querer, sino que se ha de dar más energía al imperio de la voluntad para que tenga efecto. Esta fuerza más tenaz se lo que propiamente llamamos propósitos.” Ibid., p. 250.

²⁹³ Some of the tricks by which the enemy deceives people are, extremes of indiscreet fervour or aloofness; doubt in one’s capacity, etc. see *ibid.*, pp. 255-258.

Firmeza, para que no se disipe fácilmente. 4. Humildad, para que estirpe en las propias fuerzas. 5. Aumento cotidiano, para que procure subir a la cumbre de la perfección.”²⁹⁴

Among the practical suggestions regarding resolutions, La Palma is of the opinion that the resolutions should never be vague and general; they be discrete and in proportion to each one’s ability, so that it is specific and one can easily achieve the target without losing the focus. La Palma also points out that it is important not to make the examen period too large but making the examen over a shorter period of time is more beneficial; recalling the resolutions made at the beginning of the day need to be recalled during the day and when possible to be renewed as well. Therefore, what La Palma proposes is clear: “en vano se propone, lo que realmente no se cumple; en vano trabaja, el que con sola voluntad pretende aplacar a Dios; y engañase a sí mismo el que, descuidando el fruto de las buenas obras, se contenta con las flores del buen deseo.”²⁹⁵

Acknowledging that during the examen discouragement is real, La Palma cautions to watch out for getting disheartened over the apparent failure. The repeated recalling of the resolution as well as of making some physical gesture to remind oneself of it are indeed helpful; the external sign is a help to recall what one has proposed internally.²⁹⁶

8.4.2.2 Examining the Day

The resolution made at the beginning of the day remains only a desire if it is not put into practice during the day; the diligence during the day and the faithful examining of the particular faults make this exercise move from mere wish to practical action. The merit of examining every day is summed up by the author as follows:

durante el día se ha de cuidar que a estas flores de buenos deseos correspondan frutos de buenas obras; para esto aprovecha en gran manera, que se renueve a menudo el propósito

²⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 263-264.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 274.

²⁹⁶ “Y no crea nadie que se atribuye virtud alguna a este signo exterior, como si este movimiento de la mano sirviese de algo para la enmienda de un vicio o de un hábito malo, pues esto sería supersticioso; sino que con este signo exterior nos obligamos a nosotros mismos a reflexionar para reconocer y reparar la culpa, y se nos advierte que debemos dolernos, y damos exteriormente testimonio de que renovamos el propósito interno.” Ibid., p. 283.

de la mañana, y que todo el esfuerzo se limite a breve tiempo. Y no hemos de aflojar en este ejercicio, aunque suceda que, por nuestra fragilidad y por los malos hábitos, volvamos a caer en el defecto que tratamos de evitar. Falta que para disminuir cada día el número de aquellos defectos, a sus tiempos nos tomemos exacta cuenta de ellos.²⁹⁷

Therefore, it is important to do the examen twice, converting the desire into an action. In such an exercise “no basta averiguar los defectos y sus números, sino también hay que examinar las ocasiones de las caídas, y que no es suficiente un propósito cualquiera de la enmienda, sino que se han de cortar con cuidado las ocasiones de las recaídas. El fruto de este examen será, en presentándose la ocasión, hacernos más atentos, y quitar el fastidio de un examen tantas veces repetido, cuando buscamos y realmente hallamos las causas y remedios de nuestras caídas.”²⁹⁸ La Palma is of the opinion that since the particular examen is done along with the daily examen, this becomes easier as more light is shed and there is more fruit in such an exercise.²⁹⁹

La Palma considers evaluation and amendment as the important parts of the particular examen, and he attributes the effectiveness³⁰⁰ of this exercise to such diligence. “proponer por la mañana, andar durante el día con diligencia y cuidado, a horas determinadas tomarse cuenta del número de las faltas, arrepentirse de ellas, proponer la enmienda, y comparar unos tiempos con otros, para estar cierto de la enmienda. Estos actos constituyen la naturaleza de este ejercicio.”³⁰¹ Placing of hands on one’s chest, noting down the exact number times the particular fault was committed, comparison of different periods, etc. are considered as externals and they are helpful in the most essentials of this exercise.³⁰²

²⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 285.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 288.

²⁹⁹ “La segunda es, que precediendo a este examen, según la forma dicha, la petición de luz, y siguiéndole la compunción o dolor de las culpas conocidas, aquella oración que precede y la compunción que sigue, aprovecha tanto y aún más para conocer los defectos, cuando aprovecha el examen por sí mismo.” Ibid., p. 288.

³⁰⁰ “Porque, dejados a parte los provechos que son comunes al examen general y a este particular, la eficacia propia del último consiste en inquirir con el mayor conato el vicio particular que queremos corregir.” Ibid., p. 290.

³⁰¹ Ibid., p. 295.

³⁰² “Tres cosas se ordenan también aquí, que en verdad no son esenciales, pero que aprovechan en gran manera para hacer mejor el examen y para que siga más pronto la enmienda; estas cosas consisten en actos externos; v.g. en poner la mano en el pecho cuando hemos caído, en apuntar las faltas en el librito, y en comparar la que hemos apuntado al mediodía y a la noche, las de hoy con ayer, etc. Con estos actos formamos como el cuerpo de este ejercicio, para que con nuestros mismos ojos podamos contemplar nuestras faltas, y como palpar con las manos su disminución.” Ibid.

8.4.3 The Subject Matter

We have already mentioned that with regard to the choice of subject matter for the particular examen, La Palma talks of two possibilities, one of choosing to deal with some fault or of cultivation of virtues. La Palma says that for the beginners it should be the removal of a vice and cultivation of virtues for those on way to perfection.³⁰³ La Palma is meticulous in pointing out what subject to choose for each category:

la diferencia entre estas dos prácticas está, en que la primera, que se propone arrancar los vicios, es propia de los incipientes; la segunda, de los proficientes y perfectos. Porque los incipientes suelen sentir los impedimentos de esas espinas, por lo cual han de esforzarse en arrancarlas antes de plantar las virtudes, según aquello: “No queráis sembrar sobre las espinas.” Conseguido esto, han de aplicar el examen a las virtudes, para que los vicios se queden más y más ahogados, y el espíritu se disponga a subir a la cumbre de una excelentísima caridad.³⁰⁴

Here we see, as we have discussed earlier, the selection of the subject matter – drawing from the daily examen – helps one to achieve what one desires. However, La Palma also draws attention to the fact that it need not be always easy to choose the subject matter.³⁰⁵

Further, one is never to begin with interior acts, but rather with external aspects as they are easier to deal with.

nunca se ha de empezar el examen por los actos interiores. La razón es, porque aquellos actos interiores son tan sutiles, que difícilmente los observan aun los que están bien versados en las cosas espirituales; y porque es nuestro entendimiento tan precipitado y ligero, que apenas él mismo advierte lo que piensa. Además sucede muchas veces, que

³⁰³ While agreeing that Ignatius never spoke of the cultivation of virtues as the subject of the examen La Palma says: “lo que hace el que da instrucciones a un viajero sobre el camino que debe seguir. Le da dirección para el principio del camino con avisos seguros, y una vez empezada bien la jornada, deja la prudencia del viajero el discurso del camino. Y como el principio del camino espiritual es luchar con los vicios, en esto manda el santo Maestro fijar la vista; y de las virtudes nada dice, para no dar ocasión de algún error al discípulo, que tal vez comenzaría por donde debe acabar.” *Ibid.*, p. 298.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

³⁰⁵ In the context of the Exercises he says, “la materia de este examen no es fácil de señalar, y se puede reducir a tres cabezas: La primera, cualquiera falta natural o moral, contra los mandamientos de Dios o contra las reglas y ordenaciones, o contra la perfección de alguna virtud, o de mala condición, inclinación o pasión natural. Y, finalmente, cualquiera cosa que se pueda corregir, es materia de examen particular. El cual, cuando se hace de estas faltas, ha de ser como precepto negativo para no hacer ninguna. La segunda cabeza es de cumplir con algunos ejercicios o actos virtuosos que están en precepto o en regla o en alguna instrucción; [...]. La tercera cabeza, así como están puestas adiciones e instrucciones para los ejercicios espirituales, así se las puede poner cada uno a sí mismo acerca de las demás virtudes. La Palma, *Obras del Padre*, pp. 893-894.

aquellos pensamientos y actos no son voluntarios y libres, sino que se anticipan a la libertad; por lo cual los que tienen poco trillada la vía del espíritu, no pueden distinguir si hay en ellos culpa o no, y cuando llegan a querer sacar el número de sus faltas, están llenos de escrúpulos e inquietudes. Preséntase también una particular dificultad en corregir aquellos defectos, puesto que los actos internos no están tan sujetos al imperio de la voluntad, que no se escapen continuamente aun sin querer; pues pensamos a menudo lo que no queremos, y por mucho que nos esforcemos, no está en nuestra mano lanzar aquel pensamiento.³⁰⁶

In the same line, La Palma says that it is also important to follow the order of action-words-thoughts during the examen because action can easily be evaluated whereas thoughts are not easily subjected to scrutiny and therefore requiring more experience. And “[...] el perfeccionar los actos internos se ha de confiar a los que han habitado mucho tiempo dentro de sí, y están acostumbrados de muy atrás a observar los movimientos del hombre interior. A los incipientes les es más útil aplicar su cuidado a los actos exteriores, que como del dominio de la voluntad, son dirigidos más fácilmente, y más pronto se conoce cuándo, cuántas veces y por qué razón se apartan del camino recto.”³⁰⁷

La Palma categorizes the vices into two: spiritual like vain glory or pride and bodily like gluttony or slander.³⁰⁸ In the effort to correct the vices, the first place should be given to the exterior ones because they can cause scandal and could also give rise to bad example for others, whereas the spiritual vice is limited to the individual.³⁰⁹ And, among the bodily vices, the priority is to be given to actions before correcting words, precisely because the damage is more in action rather than in thoughts or words.³¹⁰

³⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 310-311.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 311.

³⁰⁸ “Para mayor claridad, nótese que hay ciertos vicios que llamamos espirituales, porque, a manera de polilla, nacen en la misma alma, como la vanagloria y la soberbia; otros son carnales, porque proceden de la carne y del apetito corporal, como la gula, la injuria, etc.” Ibid., p. 313.

³⁰⁹ “La primera es, que aquellos defectos exteriores causan escándalo y disminuyen en el prójimo el aprecio de la virtud, por lo cual debe esta falta ser corregida la primera. La segunda es, que aunque la raíz de los defectos esté dentro en el alma, la enmienda de estos actos arranca al mismo tiempo el raíz.” Ibid., p. 312.

³¹⁰ It is interesting to note what La Palma says about this hierarchy of vices: “[...] entre los actos exteriores, se han de sujetar a la enmienda las obras antes que las palabras. La razón es, porque cuando el pensamiento llega no solo a las palabras, sino también a las obras, es señal que aquella raíz es muy fuerte y que hay más deliberación en la voluntad; por lo cual hay necesidad de pronto remedio, y de empezar la cura por aquella parte donde la llaga es más grave. Es cosa clara que se peca más gravemente cuando el pecado es de obra; [...]” Ibid., pp. 312-313.

Therefore, those who are beginners in spiritual life should concentrate on the external aspects like common life, organizing well one's time, ordering one's feelings, etc. while those who are advanced in life can fight the spiritual vices by employing the contrary virtues like humility against pride, poverty against avarice, etc.³¹¹ La Palma also suggests that those who have reached certain perfection in life could choose to examine their life based on theological virtues and greater purity of intention.³¹²

8.4.3.1 Fruits of the Examen

La Palma talks of the goal of the particular examen as “el cumplimiento de los buenos propósitos, la práctica de los santos deseos, y la observancia de las divinas inspiraciones.” And he divides the fruits of the particular examen into two classes:

unos se conciben para quitar defectos, otros para plantar y perfeccionar virtudes. El fin de este ejercicio es la eficacia de unos y otros. Porque este examen quita tanto los defectos morales o culpables como los naturales, que por la inclinación o pasión nos inducen a las culpas morales, y engendra los hábitos de las virtudes por la frecuencia de los actos. De modo que este examen se ha de tener por un instrumento universal, con que se perfecciona el alma interior y exteriormente, en los ojos de Dios y de los hombres.³¹³

Other than these, the faithful practice of the examen also brings about secondary fruits, and they vary depending on the subject matter. In La Palma's opinion the one who fights the vices in him/her gains knowledge of himself/herself, while the ones who have virtue as the centre of their examen have their souls advancing in perfection.³¹⁴ The practice of this exercise in perfection needs great care and discipline because there is always the temptations of discouragement and pusillanimity on one side, and confidence in one's own

³¹¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 336ff.

³¹² La Palma makes a distinction between those who are well versed and those who are perfect. In the section where he deals with the material for examen La Palma talks of ‘materia del examen particular para los proficientes’ (pp. 335ff.) and ‘materia del examen particular para los perfectos’ (pp. 339ff.) Those whom he calls ‘los proficientes’ are to take a virtue as the focal point of examen while those who are ‘los perfectos’ are to take spiritual exercises and theological virtues as the subject matter. ‘Los proficientes’ are to use the virtues in order to counter a vice as we have mentioned. Though he makes this distinction here, in all other places he talks of the beginners and the advanced.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 348.

³¹⁴ “Porque de la lucha contra los vicios nace el conocimiento de sí mismo, que estiman en mucho y con gran ardor desean los que caminan a la perfección. En efecto, la experiencia y la práctica presenta a la vista, y hace palpar con la mano, la diferencia que hay entre el tiempo que propone, y el tiempo en que quebranta lo propuesto; que diversidad hay entre los impulsos internos, que la liberal mano de Dios misericordioso infunde, y los que proceden de la corrupción de la naturaleza y nuestra flaqueza.” *Ibid.*, pp. 348-349.

capacity and subsequently pride on the other hand. From this it follows that the faithful practice of all the steps would help in achieving greater perfection in life.

8.5 Observations

The exhaustive treatise on the daily examen clearly indicates the two-fold objective of it – knowing the sins and their removal. As we have seen, the second step of the examen is clearly asking for such a grace to know the sins, in order that one may reject them. And the third step – which is termed as the body of the whole exercise – is called the inquisition of sins. The fourth and fifth step also make clear that the focus is on sins as they talk of asking pardon for one’s sins and then making amendments accordingly. La Palma pinpoints cleansing of the conscience and confession of sins as the two fruits expected from the examen. As part of the examen the focus is also on experiencing compunction and this is also in relation to sins and confession. Based on our analysis of the whole treaty on the daily examen, where La Palma talks of asking grace to know the root of sins as well as doing a thorough evaluation of sins in one’s days, it is amply clear that he talks of a moralistic examen. Moreover, he presents the examen as an exercise to get rid of all the mortal and venial sin and thus to reach perfection.

It is worth noting that in his analysis on the subject matter of the examen, La Palma deals in detail on the whole area of thought process and how one needs to use the various rules given by Ignatius. By invoking the rules of discernment in knowing the complex thoughts, La Palma indeed makes reference to the discerning process. In La Palma’s view, a great deal of prudence is needed to do a good examen, especially of thoughts as they do not come clearly under the domain of will. Though this reference to the discerning process is limited to identifying the roots of particular sins, it goes beyond the moralistic realm. However, the author never talks of any other object of the examen other than knowing the sins and confessing them. Therefore, we can say, though La Palma alludes to the process of discernment, he never terms the whole process of examen anything other than a moralistic exercise.

9 Luis de la Puente

Luis de la Puente was born in 1554 into a largely religious family in Valladolid, Spain.³¹⁵ When he joined the Society in 1574 at Medina del Campo he already had a Bachelor's degree and two years of Theology. After the novitiate, he completed theology under Francisco Suárez, and later did his tertianship under Baltasar Álvarez. La Puente served in different capacities as novice master,³¹⁶ Tertian instructor, and as rector at colleges like San Ambrosio de Valladolid. He also served as procurator of the province during the time of Claudio Aquaviva, instructor of cases of conscience at Oviedo, and overseer for various colleges of the province. From 1607-1608 La Puente was made the Visitor to the St. Albano English College, and later he dedicated his full time in spiritual direction. Thus, the vast knowledge and experience was put to use in the composition of his major works like *Meditaciones*, *Guía espiritual*, *De la perfección del cristiano en todos sus estados*, etc. The *Meditaciones* was first published in 1605, whereas *La vida del P. Baltasar Álvarez* was published in 1615. La Puente, who contributed much to the development of spirituality of the Society,³¹⁷ died in 1624.

9.1 The Examen in the *Meditaciones*

La Puente deals with the examen in his *Meditaciones*, presenting it as meditations to draw profit out of it.³¹⁸ He divides the entire work into six parts, each part dealing with one specific area of the mysteries of faith.³¹⁹ After an introduction about the nature of

³¹⁵ Cf. Manuel Ruiz Jurado, "La Puente, Luis de," in *DHCJ* vol. III, pp. 2244-2245, here 2244. His father was Alonso de la Puente, an officer at the Chancery of Valladolid. La Puente had two brothers and a sister.

³¹⁶ After the completion of tertianship at Villagarcía, La Puente was assistant to the novice master and was master of novices from 1585-1590 and again from 1591-1593. Cf. *ibid.*

³¹⁷ La Puente is considered as one of the best-known spiritual writers of the Society and his contribution to Spanish literature is recognized by the conferring him as an authority of the first *Diccionario de la lengua castellana* in 1726. Cf. Ruiz Jurado, "La Puente," p. 2245.

³¹⁸ Camilo María Abad, "El P. Luis de la Puente y los Ejercicios espirituales," in *Manresa* 1 (1925) pp. 236-247.

³¹⁹ La Puente divides this entire work into six parts. After a thorough explanation about what mental prayer is all about, in the first part he deals with sin and the way one should pray in order to purify from sins. The first part has 36 meditations. The second part, on the illuminative way, deals with the incarnation, infancy and the baptism of Our Lord, and contains 31 meditations. The third part is divided into 58 meditations on the life of Christ from his baptism till the end of public life. The fourth part contains the meditations on the passion of Christ in 57 meditations. La Puente classifies the fifth part as the Unitive

mental prayer La Puente talks in detail about the purgative way where the examen has an important role. For him the mental prayer is one of the most effective way to meditate as well as to familiarize oneself with God, and he bases these meditations on three sources namely the Scripture, Church Fathers and Scholastic Theology.³²⁰ For La Puente, any mental prayer involves memory, understanding, will and making petitions, and he defines it as,

la oración mental, de que aquí hablamos, es obra de las tres potencias interiores del alma, memoria, entendimiento y voluntad, ejercitando con el divino favor sus actos cerca de los misterios y verdades que enseña nuestra santa fe católica, y hablando dentro de nosotros mismos con Dios nuestro señor, tratando familiarmente con Él, pidiéndole sus dones y negociando todo lo necesario para nuestra salvación y perfección.³²¹

He presents the daily as well as the particular examen as meditations among other meditations on the purgative way and we take a look at them here.

9.1.1 The Daily Examination of Conscience

La Puente deals with the examen mainly in *Meditaciones*,³²² dedicating an entire meditation on the daily examen and another one on particular examen, though there are also references to it in his other writings.³²³ From the analysis that the author makes on the

way, where the 39 meditations deal with the glorified Lord. The sixth and last part contains 54 meditations on divinity, the Trinity, etc. The 275 meditations that La Puente offers are aimed at perfection in Christian life, irrespective of one's state of life.

³²⁰ Among the three sources of La Puente, the scripture is the primary one. The second source is the *Santos Padres* who were masters in mystical theology like Augustine, Chrysostom, Cassian, Gregory, Bernard, etc. La Puente places Ignatius along with these great men of the Church. As the third source for his meditations La Puente presents the Doctors of Scholasticism (*doctores escolasticos*) where he considers Thomas Aquinas as the one who merits such a name. see Luis de la Puente, *Meditaciones de los misterios de nuestra santa fe con la práctica de la oración mental sobre ellos*, (8th ed.), vol. I, Madrid: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1947, pp. 1-3.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³²² Though the majority of what La Puente talks about the examen is in *Meditaciones*, *Guía espiritual*, *Tratado de la perfección de la vida* also deal with the theme briefly. *Sentimientos y avisos espirituales* and *Tesoro Escondido* do not treat this topic. It is significant that in the *Tratados*, he treats the examen in the part dedicated to the perfection of religious.

³²³ Among his writings *Meditaciones espirituales* is the most celebrated one, achieving a name 'the common heritage of those looking for perfection.' this book has had more than 260 editions in languages such as Spanish, Latin, German, English, Italian, French, Flemish, Chinese, Portuguese, etc. See Ignacio Iparraguirre, "El venerable P. Luis de la Puente maestro de oracion," in *Manresa* 26 (1954) pp. 227-252. Here p. 227. Hereafter it will be cited as "La Puente." The richness of these meditations however does not take away credit from his other works, where he deals with the examen, like *Guía espiritual*, *De la*

interior and exterior potentials of the soul it is amply clear that the examen is to be not just superficial but a thorough analysis where every thought is subjected to scrutiny. For him then, all the methods of prayer, and not just the meditations, are aimed at helping people to pray,³²⁴ though according to the state of the person it varies; and the examen is undoubtedly part of the purgative way. For he says,

el primer modo de orar es por los mandamientos de Dios y los siete vicios capitales, que continuamente llamamos siete pecados mortales, y por las tres potencias del alma, y por los cinco sentidos, tomando todo esto por materia de meditación y oración. Este modo es propio de los que andan en la vía purgativa, procurando limpiarse de sus pecados; [...] con las demás que pertenecen al modo de orar examinando la conciencia y aparejándose para la confesión y comunión, con las cuales se alcanza la pureza del alma.³²⁵

La Puente considers purity as the goal of all mental prayers in the purgative stage and the principal aim of all the exercises in this stage is to purify from vices that afflict people.

Further, La Puente considers purification as the primary building block of the entire spiritual life; frequent use of meditation and mental prayer help in cleansing the soul, and such purification of memory, understanding, will, uncontrolled passions and the like help one to develop virtues.³²⁶ With regard to prayer in purgative way, he signals three orders: first, where one has a knowledge of oneself along with realization of one's own unworthiness; secondly with regard to one's own justification, and the third deals with ways to remove the roots of vices and past sins. And he refers to the examination of conscience in the second order where one is concerned with undertaking activities that promote such

perfección del cristiano en todos sus estados, Sentimientos y avisos espirituales, Tesoro escondido en las enfermedades y trabajos and Vida del P. Baltasar Álvarez.

³²⁴ “En este fue muy excelente el seráfico Doctor San Buenaventura, en muchos y muy largos tratados que hizo de estas materias; pero no lo fue menos nuestro glorioso Padre Ignacio, poniendo en su pequeño libro no solamente variedad de materia para la meditación, sino varios modos de orar, por exámenes de la conciencia, por aplicación de los sentidos interiores del alma, por varias semejanzas y parábolas; y en especial enseñó tres modos de orar muy provechosos, acomodados a los que caminan por las tres vías arriba dichas, purgativa, iluminativa y unitiva, aunque todos tres son de gran provecho para todos.” La Puente, *Meditaciones*, vol. I, p. 37.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

³²⁶ “Entre las excelencias que tiene el uso frecuente de la meditación y oración mental, la primera, que abre camino para otras muchas, es purificar, [...] su excelencia consiste en limpiar esta segunda fuente en virtud de la primera, purificando la memoria de olvidos culpables, el entendimiento de errores, la voluntad de torcidos querer, los apetitos de sus pasiones desenfrenadas, los sentidos de sus demasías, la carne de sus regalos sensuales y el alma de sus viciosas costumbres [...].” *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

justification.³²⁷ For La Puente the examen is part of various steps in purgative way where the goal is a perfect conversion.³²⁸

9.1.2 Purification of the Soul

With regard to purification of the soul, La Puente makes a difference between cleansing the external powers of the soul along with the five senses. With regard to the inner powers of the soul, he particularly cites the understanding and the will and the faculties of imagination.

9.1.2.1 Understanding

Discussing the inner powers of the soul which can be subjected to attack from vices, La Puente thinks it is important to consider all the sins that originate in the faculty of understanding³²⁹ and hence the need to examine well. We summarize here what the author identifies as the seven vices:

1. El primero es ignorancia de las cosas que estoy obligado a saber, como son las que debo creer, pedir, recibir y obrar.
2. El segundo vicio es imprudencia o precipitación y falta de consideración en las cosas que tengo de hacer o decir, arrojándome a ellas con ímpetu de pasión, sin primero considerar si son lícitas o ilícitas, o sin tomar sobre ellas el consejo conveniente. De donde proceden innumerables errores y descuidos en todas las materias de virtud.

³²⁷ “Estos se reducen a tres órdenes. El primero abraza los actos de conocimiento propio con desprecio de sí mismo, en que consiste la verdadera humildad [...]. El segundo orden abraza los actos que disponen para nuestra justificación; es a saber: temor de la divina justicia, esperanza en la divina misericordia, dolor perfecto de los pecados, riguroso examen de la conciencia, confesión humilde y entera de mis culpas, satisfacción con obras de penitencia para vengar en mí mismo las injurias que hice contra Dios, y otros semejantes. El tercer orden abraza los actos que ayudan para quitar las raíces y reliquias de los pecados pasados, a fin de no volver más a ellos.” Ibid., pp. 66-67.

³²⁸ This same desire is seen in the review of prayer where he says, “acabado el rezo es muy importante examinar lo que se ha hecho, hacienda reflexión sobre todo, y mirando la atención o distracción, la devoción o sequedad de espíritu, y lo demás que haya sucedido; pidiendo a nuestro Señor perdón de las faltas; y dándole gracias por lo bueno que hubiere habido, pues es suyo, así como el faltar es nuestro.” La Puente, *Tratado de la perfección en todos los estados de la vida del cristiano. De la perfección del cristiano en el estado eclesiástico*, vol. 1, Barcelona: Librería Subirana, 1873, p. 466.

³²⁹ “[...] considerar los vicios y pecados que tienen su particular asiento en el entendimiento, y los daños que proceden de ellos, examinando aparte que me cabe de cada uno.”

3. El tercer vicio es temeridad en juzgar los dichos y hechos de los prójimos, condenándolos o sospechando de ellos sin bastante fundamento.
4. El cuarto vicio es inconstancia y mutabilidad en lo bueno que he determinado, mudando fácilmente de parecer; de donde procede no cumplir los buenos propósitos que he hecho, ni guardar la palabra que he dado a Dios o a los hombres, y dar fácil crédito a las tentaciones del demonio y a los engaños halagüeños de la carne.
5. El quinto vicio, por el contrario, es protervia³³⁰ y pertinacia³³¹ en mi propio juicio y parecer, sin quererle doblegar ni rendir al juicio de los mayores o más sabios.
6. El sexto vicio es astucia, o prudencia de carne o sabiduría del mundo, inventando con sagacidad medios para salir con mis intentos carnales u mundanos, de donde nacen los fraudes y engaños con palabras o con obras e hipocresías.
7. El séptimo vicio es curiosidad, deseando desordenadamente saber lo que no me conviene, como es desear saber cosas dañosas a mi alma, o que exceden mi capacidad, por malos medios; o las que son inútiles y vanas.³³²

These seven vices in the area of understanding can be overcome, after a diligent examen, partly through penance and partly by mortification, in order that the faculty of understanding would be like silver, purified seven times.³³³

9.1.2.2 The Will

Indicating that great harm that can come from following one's own will La Puente exhorts to purify it well: "voluntad propia es la que solamente atiende a querer su propio gusto, dejando el de Dios y el de los prójimos. Y llamase propio, porque siendo mi voluntad hechura de Dios, criada para conformarse con la divina, yo me alzo con ella y la apropio a mí solo, como si fuera mía, y uso de ella, para querer solamente lo que me da gusto."³³⁴ Since the root cause of many of the vices and sins is one's own will ("la voluntad propia es reina y capitana de todos los vicios y pecados") it is necessary to purify it during the

³³⁰ Protervia: tenacidad, soberbia, arrogancia e insolencia. Cf. *Diccionario de Autoridades*, vol. 3, p. 412.

³³¹ Pertinacia: obstinación, terquedad o tenacidad en mantener lo que ha aprendido en el ánimo o resolución que ha tomado. Cf. *Diccionario de Autoridades*, vol. 3, p. 237.

³³² La Puente, *Meditaciones*, vol. I, pp. 269-271.

³³³ "Estos son los siete vicios del entendimiento, en los cuales, si bien me examino, me hallare muy culpado, y de ellos me tengo de acusar humildemente delante de Dios, [...]. Y así, con grande cuidado he de procurar, parte con la penitencia, parte con la mortificación, purificarme de estos siete vicios para que sea mi entendimiento como plata siete veces purgada (Ps. 11, 7), suplicando al Espíritu Santo me purifique de ellos con sus siete dones." *Ibid.*, p. 271.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

examen. The three major vices, – disobedience, perversion of good intentions and appropriation of goods for oneself³³⁵ – lead one away from will of God. La Puente reiterates that one’s will is the fodder for eternal flame (“pobladora de los infiernos y cebo de los fuegos eternos”) and therefore the need to cleanse oneself in order to conform to the will of God.

La Puente talks of a third aspect that needs purification: “las otras potencias interiores del alma, que son la imaginación y apetitos sensitivos.” La Puente here points to the complexity involved with the imaginative power of the soul: images of all kinds can enter the mind through such medium.³³⁶ In the same way, the power of appetite can present waves of passions³³⁷ and can influence the will to move. The subtlety of the matter is highlighted by La Puente when, he says “porque la pasión del deleite me hace desear lo que aborrece la codicia de la honra, y el deseo de la honra, lo que huye la pasión de la avaricia. Y, como dice el Sabio (Prov., 13: 4), siempre quiero y no quiero [...]”³³⁸

And the importance of a diligent daily examen is reiterated by La Puente in the following way:

quiero concluir este tratado, con avisar a los sacerdotes y eclesiásticos, que se ocupan continuamente en tan altos y provechosos ejercicios, hagan de cuando en cuando un examen más riguroso, para ver el provecho que sacan de ellos imaginando que les dice nuestro Señor aquello del profeta Ageo: aplicad vuestros corazones a pensar bien vuestros caminos, y hallaréis que sembráis mucho, y cogéis poco; coméis, y no quedáis harto;

³³⁵ “El primero es desobediencia general a todo lo que manda Dios por Sí mismo o por sus ministros. El segundo vicio es malear y torcer la intención en lo bueno que hace, haciéndolo, no porque es voluntad de Dios, sino por otros fines de su propio gusto vano, interesal o sensual, por lo cual lo bueno convierte en malo, y lo que pudiera agrandar a Dios hace que le desagrede [...]. El tercer vicio es apropiarse a **si** todas las cosas que puede, sin reparar en el daño que hace a otros. De donde nacen innumerables injusticias, avaricias, crueldades, contiendas, pleitos, agravios y discordias, etc.” Ibid., pp. 272-273.

³³⁶ “Mi potencia imaginativa es como una sala pintada con muchas imágenes y figuras, unas feas, otras profanas y otras ridículas, monstruosas y disparatadas, entreteniéndose en pintarlas, y saboreándose en mirarlas, y solicitando al entendimiento para que las mire, y arrebátandole muchas veces tras sí para que piense en ellas. De donde nacen originalmente muchos pecados, que llaman delectación morosa, en materia de carnalidades, venganzas, ambiciones y avaricias, deleitándome con la imaginación de estas cosas como si las tuviera presente.” Ibid., p. 275.

³³⁷ “Mis potencias apetitivas son como un mar turbadísimo, combatido de once olas de pasiones encontradas entre sí mismas, es a saber: amor y odio, deseo y huida, tristeza y gozo, esperanza y desesperación, temor y audacia, y la ira. Las cuales por mayor parte aplico a lo malo con grande desorden, porque amo lo que había de aborrecer, y aborrezco lo que había de amar; [...]. De donde nacen graves pecados, porque los apetitos con estos afectos, solicitan la voluntad y la llevan tras sí para que consienta con ellos.” Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid., p. 276.

bebéis, y no estáis satisfecho; cubríos y no andáis calientes; trabajáis para allegar riquezas, y es como echarlas en saco roto.³³⁹

With these background, we now see how La Puente proposes the five steps of such an examen.

9.1.3 The Five Steps

La Puente qualifies the examen when he says that “uno de los medios más eficaces para purificar el alma de los vicios es el uso continuo de examinar la conciencia cada día antes de acostarse” as well as “es la más provechosa de cuantas yo he visto, porque alcanza un modo de orar excelentísimo para toda suerte de personas.”³⁴⁰ La Puente, just like La Palma, points to thanksgiving as the first step of the examen because he believes that every day we bear two debts, one as gifts received from God and the second as the offences committed against Him.³⁴¹

The second point of the examen where the focus is asking for grace, La Puente emphasises the importance of God’s light in knowing as well as the grace to detest sins after having great pain for committing them. He points out that there are three great needs which make this petition more appropriate:

el primero es grande olvido de mi memoria: el segundo, grande ceguedad de mi entendimiento: el tercero, grande frialdad de mi voluntad. De donde procede que el demonio me tiene fuertemente atado con una cuerda tresdoblada de mis pecados, la cual dificultosamente puedo romper (Eccli. 4, 12); porque de unos pecados me olvido con la facilidad que los hago; otros no conozco por ignorancia, y los que conozco no los lloro como debo por mi grande tibieza.³⁴²

When such is the force of sins, light from God and grace to reject sins are necessary and, it is interesting to see a prayer proposes that would capture such desire: “Dios, mío, con

³³⁹ Ibid., pp. 466-467.

³⁴⁰ La Puente, *Meditaciones*, vol. I, pp. 276-277.

³⁴¹ See *ibid.*, p. 278.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 279.

vuestra inspiración remediad mis olvidos, con vuestro fuego de amor desterrad mis frialdades para que conozca mis culpas y las llore de modo que alcance perdón de ellas.”³⁴³

The third point, that of examining thoroughly the conscience, is the crucial step of the whole process: where one is to examine with great reverence if one has committed any sins with regard to thoughts, words or deeds by way of commission or omission. La Puente prescribes a rigorous examen, where one is to imagine as though standing in front of a judge, to see not just injustice but justice and good works performed where there is the possibility of bad circumstances.³⁴⁴ It is worth noting that La Puente insists on a detailed analysis: “lleno de un santo temor en la presencia de Dios, comenzaré a examinar todos los pecados que he cometido en aquel día por pensamiento, palabra y obra y por omisión o negligencia, y con más atención procuraré averiguar si tengo algunos de los que llama David pecados ocultos por haberlos cometido con ignorancia o inadvertencia culpable o por ilusión y engaño del demonio por obra de virtud, como si tuviese por celo lo que es ira.”³⁴⁵

La Puente points out that in such a minute examining the Seven Capital Sins, Three Powers of the Soul, Five Senses of the Body and the Ten Commandments assume a greater role as aids in making a better examen.³⁴⁶ He talks of how one commits sins through the five senses and therefore the need to analyse them³⁴⁷ thoroughly:

primeramente, con los ojos he pecado gustando de ver cosas hermosas, vanas, curiosas y dañosas por sola vanidad o curiosidad, o sensualidad, con inmodestia y libertad de carne y desedificación de otros [...]. Con el olfato, gusto y tacto he pecado en muchas cosas de la gula y lujuria [...]. Pues ¿Qué diré de los pecados de la lengua? Porque unas palabras he dicho contra el respeto debido al nombre de Dios, otras contra la honra y fama del prójimo y otras en grave daño de mi alma.³⁴⁸

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ “[...] no solamente las injusticias sino también las justicias y obras buenas con las cuales suelen mezclarse circunstancias malas.”

³⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 279-280.

³⁴⁶ See José Calveras, “Las aplicaciones de sentidos en las meditaciones del P. La Puente,” *Manresa* 26 (1954) pp. 157-176.

³⁴⁷ La Puente in his meditation on the examen points out the importance of analysing the inner powers of the soul this way: “para este examen ayudará mucho lo que se dijo en los primeros puntos de las meditaciones sobre siete vicios capitales y sobre los mandamientos, sentidos y potencias del alma; porque allí está puesto todo lo que puede ser materia de un examen muy menudo y diligente.” Ibid., p. 280.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 263-264.

Along with these, La Puente adds also the sins of immodesty and improper use of external human capacities to the list of sins. For La Puente, ill-ordered and unmortified senses are the principal cause of harm as they act as ‘doors and windows’ of death. “[Sentidos] son las puertas y ventanas, por las cuales, como dice el profeta Jeremías (9, 21), entra la muerte de la culpa en la casa de mi alma y destruye la vida de la gracia y ahoga el calor vital de la caridad, y por ellos entran las tentaciones de los demonios, los cuales, como ladrones, roban la casa de mi conciencia, despojándola de los dones de Dios y de las virtudes.”³⁴⁹

La Puente underlines the importance of scrutinizing what goes inside the soul precisely because it is here that evil can act when the senses are not mortified adequately. It is through the medium of the senses that images and visuals enter which in turn provoke imagination and memory to lead the soul to restlessness. He points out the complexity involved in analysing what is received through such senses:

y por esto también es verdad que mi ojo mi roba mi alma, porque me roba la atención, el pensamiento y la afición, haciéndome que el alma no este tanto dentro de mí, cuanto fuera en la cosa que piensa y ama. Yo mismo también me salgo por estas puertas fuera de mí mismo a vagar por todo el mundo, y tras de mí se sale el espíritu de la devoción, oración y contemplación. De manera que cuando quiero volver a entrar dentro de mí, no acierto ni hallo quietud en mi propia casa, por los alborotos que experimento en ella.³⁵⁰

Affirming that carelessness in dealing with senses can do harm, La Puente presents ways to mortify the senses,³⁵¹ and therefore during the examination of conscience the task would be see how far one’s senses were truly mortified and through which ‘door or window’ death entered one’s soul.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 265.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 266.

³⁵¹ “Por tanto, alma mía, cierra las puertas y ventanas de tus sentidos si no quieres que la muerte y la turbación entre por ellos. Tapa y enfrena tu boca para que no te mate tu propia lengua. Cerca tus oídos con espinas para que no te espinen las lenguas ajenas, sacando de lo que oyes, culpas propias.” Ibid. La Puente talks about “santo enfrenamiento and mortificación de los sentidos” as means to mortify one’s senses. He argues that after such mortification through the same senses it is the grace of God, and life that enters: “los bienes grandes que trae consigo el santo enfrenamiento y mortificación de los sentidos [...] además de cerrar la puerta a tantos males como se han dicho, la abre para que entre en el alma el espíritu de Dios, que mora de buena gana en almas mortificadas a su carne y a los deleites de los sentidos; y también la abre para que entre en ella el espíritu de la oración y devoción y de la contemplación, [...]. Demás de esto, los sentidos, cuando hacen sus actos según la voluntad de Dios, que es el fin de su mortificación, son puertas y ventanas por donde entra la vida; y lo que ven y oyen, gustan y hablan, les ayuda para alcanzar la vida espiritual de la gracia y el aumento de ella.” Ibid., p. 267.

What marks out La Puente from other spiritual authors who treat the examen is that he considers discretion of spirits as an important aspect of the process of purification and examination.

Para hacer esta pureza, y examen, concede Nuestro Señor aquella gracia que S. Pablo llama, discreción de espíritus, que es una lumbré interior, con la cual se conoce la diferencia que hay entre el buen espíritu, y el malo, ayudándole también de las señales exteriores que cada uno brota: porque como dijo el Salvador, por sus frutos serán conocidos. Y cuando los frutos de ambos tienen alguna semejanza, la luz divina descubre algo que se diferencian inspirando algún medio exterior que lo descubra, [...].³⁵²

Thus, we can see that along with other observation on the complexity of analysing what goes on in the soul, La Puente gives another dimension to the practice of the examen.

As practical suggestions, La Puente recommends that the day be divided into time-periods of two hours, in order to focus better all these aspects:

el modo de hacerle será dividiendo el día en partes y mirando lo que hice en las dos primeras horas del día; luego en la otras dos, apartando lo precioso de lo vil, y si hallare algo bueno, lo atribuiré a Dios con agradecimiento, y lo malo atribuiré a mi libertad estragada, y de todo junto hare una humilde confesión delante de Dios con vergüenza y confusión muy profunda, [...] yo me determiné a confesar mis pecados delante de Dios, no para excusarme, sino para acusarme; no aligerando mis culpas, sino agravándolas y ponderando mucho la injusticia que hice contra Dios en cometerlas, porque éste es el camino para alcanzar el perdón de ellas.³⁵³

Thus, the analysis and detailed examination could later on lead to a good confession of one's sins.

The fourth step of the examen is asking for great pain for one's sins that would lead eventually to a contrition. And La Puente says, "el cuarto punto será procurar un gran dolor de los pecados, que llegue a ser contrición, doliéndome de ellos principalmente por ser ofensas de Dios, sumo bien mío, a quien deseo amar y amo sobre todas las cosas."³⁵⁴ It is amply clear that this step is linked to confession from what La Puente says on the

³⁵² Luis de la Puente, *Guía espiritual en la que se trata de la oración, meditación, y contemplación de las divinas visitas y gracias extraordinarias, de las mortificaciones y obras heroicas que las acompañan* (nueva edición), Madrid: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1926, p. 247.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

³⁵⁴ La Puente, *Meditaciones*, vol. I, p. 267.

importance making a promise to confess the sins. In order to help having such contrition La Puente proposes a comparison of the first point with the third,³⁵⁵ i.e., to compare the great benefits received from the Lord with the offences one has committed, so as to feel great shame for it. This is to have a clear conscience, devoid of all strains of mortal sins which one may have committed on a particular day.³⁵⁶

The fifth point of the examen is explained the author of the *Meditaciones* in the following way: “el quinto punto es hacer un propósito muy eficaz, con la divina gracia, de enmendarme el día siguiente y no caer en culpas semejantes, [...] es necesario haber examinado las ocasiones que tuve de caer por razón de tal jugar o tal persona o tal negocio, y proponer juntamente apartarme de esta ocasión, si puedo dejarla, y si no, proponerme de tener mayor cautela y entrar en ella con prevención.”³⁵⁷ And he proposes to end this step praying for much needed grace to fulfil the resolutions, precisely because we need divine grace to keep the promises.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁵ He not just proposes a comparison but in meditation 31 describes in detail how it can be profitable to confess well. As resolution La Puente proposes: “en orden al segundo acto, que es la confesión, presupuesto el examen y averiguación de los pecados al modo que se ha dicho en el punto tercero de la *Meditación 30*, el primer propósito ha de ser confesarlos todos enteramente, por más afrentosos que sean, [...]. El segundo propósito ha de ser manifestar mis pecados, no solamente con entereza, sino con toda la humildad que pudiere, haciendo una confesión de todos clara, pura, sencilla, desnuda y bien intencionada, no excusando mis pecados ni aligerándolos, no echando la culpa al próximo, como Adán, ni al demonio, como Eva, sino a mí mismo, [...]. El tercer propósito ha de ser oír la reprensión del confeso con gran silencio y humildad, sin interrumpirle, [...].” *Ibid.*, pp. 299-300.

³⁵⁶ “De suerte que si en el examen de la noche digo a Dios de todo mi corazón: Pésame, Dios mío, de haberte ofendido, porque te amo sobre todas las cosas criadas, y antes quisiera haberlas perdido que haber pecado, y con tu gracia propongo de confesar todas mis culpas, con determinación de nunca más volver a ellas, al punto quedo justificado. Y si aquella noche me muriese de repente, sin poderme confesar, aunque hubiese hecho muchos pecados mortales, no me condenaría por ellos. Por donde se ve la importancia de este dolor antes de acostarme; porque si he pecado mortalmente y la muerte me saltea durmiendo, como ha salteado a muchos, con este dolor me salvaré, y sin él me condenaré.” *Ibid.*

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 281-282.

³⁵⁸ La Puente points out that since the human nature is weak and fickle, grace of God must be sought. “Mas porque nuestros propósitos son muy flacos y mudables si nuestro Señor no los fortifica y establece con su gracia, tengo de suplicarle que, pues me dio tal propósito, también me dé gracia para cumplirla, y acabaré con la oración del *Pater noster*, haciendo pausa con sentimiento en las tres últimas peticiones que contiene, [...].” *Ibid.*, p. 282.

9.2 The Examen in Relation to Self-Knowledge

So far, we have seen what La Puente talked of the daily examen in the *Meditaciones* and in the *Guía espiritual* La Puente deals with the examen as a way to grow in self-awareness in the presence of the Lord. Since this aspect gives us insight into and closely linked to what La Puente thinks of the daily examen we take them up here.

de suerte que la meditación engendraba los afectos de la vía purgativa, y estos ejecutaban la purificación del espíritu con gran vigor y perfección. Y en esto consiste la excelencia de aquel nobilísimo ejercicio que llama examen de conciencia y es un modo de oración, y meditación del propio conocimiento para purificar el espíritu, barriéndole, escardándole, limándole, y abrasándole con las brasas de los encendidos afectos, que se sacan del altar, que es Cristo, y prenden en el altar de nuestro corazón.³⁵⁹

He affirms that God is not present outside, rather in the interior of a person, and therefore can reach by meditation.³⁶⁰ While this reiterates the importance of mental prayer, this also points to the role of the examen in spiritual life.

La Puente argues that the great faith and desire to know the Eternal judge, who is full of mercy and compassion, will help in spiritual growth. Thus, he links knowing the Lord, knowing oneself as well as evaluating one's worth in front of the Lord. "Con esta firme fe has de tener gran deseo, como Job, de conocer a tu juez: conocer, digo su bondad y misericordia, su liberalidad y apacibilidad en recibir a los pecadores con entrañas de Padre, porque este conocimiento de Dios te alentará en este examen para no desmayar, por muchas miserias que halles, y te animará a que busques la presencia de este Señor, y el lugar donde tiene su tribunal, que es tu mismo corazón."³⁶¹ La Puente also proposes that in and through the examination of activities one can grow in self-knowledge as this helps in

³⁵⁹ La Puente, *Guía espiritual*, p. 412.

³⁶⁰ "Esto declaró maravillosamente San Gregorio, diciendo que los que mucho aman en Dios, entran en las cosas interiores para hallarle, *Et quia Deus in superficie non jacet*: Y porque Dios no está en la sobrehoz, trabajan con meditaciones, y lecciones devotas y con examen continuo de sus pensamientos, y discursos, buscándole sin cesar hasta que le hallen. Como si dijera: El perfecto conocimiento de los misterios de Dios, que se llama Dios escondido, no se halla en la sobrehoz de las criaturas, ni en la corteza sola de las Divinas Escrituras, sino en el interior y secreto de ellas, penetrándolas con la vista interior del alma, mediante la lección y meditación profunda del entendimiento." *Ibid.*, p. 335.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 413.

developing a true abhorrence for one's sins.³⁶² In such an examination it is proper to evaluate all the words, actions and even thoughts:

entra, pues, en este lugar y comienza a examinar todos los pensamientos, palabras, deseos, y obras que has hecho. Y como el que limpia y sacude el trigo, aparta el grano de la paja y de la neguilla, echando a mal la paja y quedándose con el grano limpio, así tu has de procurar conocer bien todas tus obras, apartando lo precioso de lo vil, y el grano de las virtudes de la paja de los vicios, y de la neguilla de tu imperfecciones, y en habiéndolas apartado con el conocimiento, has de apartarlas también con el afecto, aborreciendo las malas, doliéndote de haberlas hecho, con propósito eficaz de no volver más a ellas, sacudiéndolas de ti como paja que no vale más que para cebar el fuego del infierno o el del purgatorio.³⁶³

Thus, we see La Puente considers this examination not just as another evaluation of life, but as a true examination of what goes deep in conscience.

La Puente insists on examining not just thoughts and words, but also what goes beneath those when he says,

de aquí es que, por divina inspiración, en este mismo examen luego tratan de degollar y sacrificar a Dios los apetitos y pasiones de la carne, figurados por el cabrito, y todos los deseos y pensamientos, de las cosas deleitables de esta vida, figurados por el caldo en que se cuece. Porque si de veras conoces y aborreces todas las ocasiones y raíces de ellas, sin dejar a vida cosa que te provoque a la recaída. De suerte que la materia del propio conocimiento y del examen no solamente sea la obra, sino la raíz de ella, así la interior como la ocasión exterior, ofreciendo de todo a Dios un holocausto muy perfecto.³⁶⁴

La Puente visualizes such an examen as means to grow in self-knowledge, so as to resist the evil and win over the vices gradually. He further insists that this should be done faithfully, every single day: “Para llegar a tanta perfección como se ha dicho es menester frecuentar con mucho espíritu este soberano ejercicio del propio conocimiento, el cual ha de ser como pan cotidiano, de que has de comer algo cada día [...] comenzar la oración retirada por algún breve ejercicio del propio conocimiento, examinando las faltas que

³⁶² In the section ‘práctica de otro modo de examinar nuestras obras’ La Puente says, “para quitar el fastidio con alguna variedad, pondré aquí otro modo de practicar el propio conocimiento en el examen de nuestras obras.”

³⁶³ Ibid., pp. 421-422.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 422.

hubieres hecho en aquel día, o noche precedente, humillándote y acusándote de ellas delante de Dios.”³⁶⁵

With regards to the frequency of such examen La Puente says that it is important to dedicate fifteen minutes so as not to leave out any aspect. And he proposes these three times as before going to bed, at midday, and if required, in the morning. To those who look for greater perfection La Puente’s suggestion is to do the examen every hour, like Ignatius and many others.³⁶⁶ In order to reach such greater levels of perfection La Puente recommends that the examen could be done of every work that one does, pointing again the importance of this practice in self-knowledge and perfection.³⁶⁷

9.3 The Particular Examen

True to its nature, La Puente recommends the particular examen to uproot vices that afflict people deeply, and though he bases himself on Cassian and others, the insight of Ignatius forms the central pillar of this ascetic practice.

Demás del cuidado general que debemos tener con limpiar el alma de todos sus vicios y pecados, es muy conveniente, como dicen los Santos Padres, y especialmente Casiano, poner particular estudio en arrancar uno, el que más daño suele hacernos; porque con este cuidado tan especial se vencerá más fácilmente y vencido este, podemos tomar a pechos la victoria de orto, hasta vencerlos todos [...]. Para este fin enseñó nuestro glorioso Padre San Ignacio un modo de hacer examen particular de un vicio; en el cual está encerrado un modo de orar muy provechoso, repartido en tres tiempos del día, es a saber: a la mañana, al mediodía y a la noche.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 424.

³⁶⁶ La Puente also cites the habit of Ignatius of examining every hour. He also points out that this practice was recommended by many others like Abbot Pastor, St John Climacus, St. Dorothy, St. Bernard, etc. See *ibid.*, pp. 425-426.

³⁶⁷ “Y no pienses que es trabajo excusado ocuparte en tanto examen, porque hallarás sé verdad lo que decía de sí San Bernardo: cuanto me examino con mayor diligencia, tanto más faltas hallo en los rincones de mi conciencia, porque con este fervor crece la luz y me descubre lo que antes no conocía; y cuando la culpa se siente mucho, el mismo sentimiento abre los ojos para conocerla más y descubrir los malos ramos que brota. Y de aquí es que otros más fervorosos no solo se examinan cada hora, sino en cada obra.” *Ibid.*, p. 426.

³⁶⁸ La Puente, *Meditaciones*, vol. I, pp. 282-283.

Thus, La Puente talks of considering one vice as the focus of the examen in order to gradually win over other vices.

At the first time of the examen La Puente proposes a brief moment of thanksgiving as a way of beginning the day. “Lo primero, a la mañana, en vistiéndome, hincado de rodillas, como Daniel, y puesto en la presencia de Dios, le adoraré, dándole gracias por la vida, quietud y sueño que me dió la noche pasada, y por los peligros de que me libró, y de camino iré también examinando si después de acostado, durmiendo o velando, me ha sucedido algo que sea culpa, doliéndome de ello muy de corazón.”³⁶⁹ After such a prayer one is to offer to God the entire day, asking for the grace to have the entire day dedicated to God’s service. Then the firm resolution to quit the particular vice is made in the following way:

después de esto haré un propósito muy valeroso y determinando de apartarme aquel día, con la divina gracia [...] con el propósito muy acercado y fuerte de destruirlos todos en cuanto eran contrarios a Dios, deseando que en la ciudad de mi alma no viva cosa que le ofenda. Pero en particular he de proponer con más fuerza apartarme de aquel vicio que deseo desarraigar de mi corazón, concibiendo un santo odio contra él por el daño que me hace.³⁷⁰

Thus, we can see that for him it is closely connected with the grace of God.

La Puente points to some practical aspects of doing the examen³⁷¹ when he says “para que este propósito sea eficaz, ayudará mucho no tomar las cosas a bulto y sin reconocer las dificultades que tienen, sino prevenirlas con ojos de la prudencia, y por la mañana imaginar todas las dificultades, pesadumbres, desprecios y ocasiones de tropezar que probablemente se me pueden ofrecer en aquel día.”³⁷² One should always keep in mind

³⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 283.

³⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 283-284.

³⁷¹ La Puente is highly theoretical, and at the same time he keeps practical aspects of spirituality. This comes mainly from his years of experience as the professor of theology as well as spiritual director. Regarding this Iparraguirre comments, “la primera nota que sobresale en su obra es una extraordinaria valía para el magisterio espiritual. A pesar de su temperamento esencialmente teórico, de su innata tendencia a especular e ir a la razón de las cosas, el celo apostólico le hizo bajar de las alturas de la teoría a las sinuosidades de los problemas concretas de las almas. [...] El P. La Puente hubiera sido un gran profesor de teología – y de hecho lo fue en dos ocasiones en Valladolid –, pero le absorbió sus energías el trato directo con las almas. La teología dio a sus escritos el fondo de solidez y profundidad doctrinal que admiramos.” Iparraguirre, “La Puente,” pp. 229-230.

³⁷² La Puente, *Meditaciones*, vol. I, p. 284.

the capacity and status while making the resolutions so that they remain indeed practical. During this first time one also should take into consideration the difficulties that may arise and pray for grace to accept them in humility, as and when they might occur. For those who are full of fervour to progress in virtues La Puente indicates that there is the possibility of getting help from any experienced director.³⁷³

At the first examen at midday one looks at the day, after making a prayer for light:

lo Segundo, al mediodía, antes de comer, puesto que en la presencia de Dios y habiéndole pedido luz para conocer mis culpas, examinaré las que he cometido aquella mañana en aquel vicio particular; y si fueren muchas, tengo de avergonzarme por no haber cumplido el propósito que hice, ni guardado la palabra que di a Dios, acusándome de infiel, inconstante y mudable, y doliéndome de la culpa que en esto he tenido.³⁷⁴

By evoking the aspect of shame La Puente hopes for a true and lasting conversion, and to this effect he also talks of the importance of recalling the suffering of Christ on the cross.³⁷⁵

At the second examen at night, La Puente talks of renewing the firm resolution to fight the vice without getting discouraged, if one has failed to keep the promise of the morning. For he says,

a la noche, antes de dormir, haré otro examen semejante al que hice antes de comer, confiriendo las veces que falté a la mañana con las que falté a la tarde; y si estas fueren menos, daré gracias a Dios por esta enmienda que ha habido, pues de su mano ha venido; pero si fueren más, me confundiré de ver que en lugar de ir adelante, vuelvo atrás; pero no tengo de desmayar, sino proponer de nuevo la enmienda muy de corazón, porque tal modo de batalla se viene a conseguir la victoria.³⁷⁶

This clearly shows the need for perseverance that La Puente recommends.

³⁷³ “Y si los muy fervorosos quieren pasar más adelante y aventajarse más en la virtud, pueden tomar el consejo que un santo abad, como refiere Casiano, dio a los que por vivir en soledad, [...]. Con estos propósitos se van aumentando mucho las virtudes, y el corazón queda esforzado para resistir a los vicios; aunque los imperfectos y tibios han de ir con tiento en tales pensamientos, porque quizá por su flaqueza se les convertirá en lazo de tentación lo que había de ser medio de aprovechamiento.” *Ibid.*

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 285-286.

³⁷⁵ “Puédome también acordar en este tiempo cómo Cristo nuestro Señor al mediodía fue crucificado, y perseveró gran parte de la tarde padeciendo gravísimos dolores en la cruz con grande constancia hasta que expiró; y en agradecimiento de este beneficio tengo de proponerme ser muy constante en no dar gusto a mi carne ni a mi voluntad en aquel vicio, hasta que él muera en mí y yo muera peleando contra él para vencerle.” *Ibid.*, p. 286.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 286-287.

It is interesting to note what La Puente talks about the importance of striking the chest: “también ayudará darme un golpe en los pechos en cayendo en esta falta: lo uno, para tener memoria de las veces que he faltado por las veces que me he dado tal golpe, y lo otro, para moverme luego a dolor de la falta y alcanzar perdón de ella.”³⁷⁷ Encouraging people to continue the fight against the vice, La Puente reminds that the Holy Spirit assists to rise seven times even when one falls several times. He is of the opinion that doing some penance and other ascetical practices help fight the vice.

Y en cumplimiento de esto puede encargarle algunas obras que juntamente sirvan de penitencias para castigo, y de medicinas para cura y preservar, y de buen régimen para convalecer. Para hacer juicio de sí mismo, aconsejele hacer cada noche examen de su conciencia, tomar a pechos por ocho días la victoria de algún vicio, o pasión, que más daño le haga, hacer cada día alguna penitencia corporal, aunque sea pequeña, como rezar algo con los brazos en cruz.³⁷⁸

Another practical advice La Puente offers is to convert the failures into times of prayer, good affect as well as to renew the desire to correct oneself.³⁷⁹

9.4 Observations

La Puente in all his treatises talked about the importance of diligent examination of oneself, and he considers this an important part of purgative way. For him mental prayer is the most effective way where the memory, understanding and will are involved. In the examination that one does every day, he recommends a thorough evaluation of all that goes

³⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 287.

³⁷⁸ La Puente, *Tratado*, p. 104. He talks of this in the treaty on confessors (*Tratado V Del oficio del confessor*) and proposes these as recommendations for penitents. Here again he underlines the importance of dealing with vices one by one and proposes frequent confession as one of the medicines. With regard to the penances and devotional practices La Puente says: “para amar la misericordia, exhórtele a dar cada día alguna limosna, aunque sea poca, a visitar algunas veces los hospitales y servir a los pobres, y rezar algo por las almas de purgatorio. [...] encomiéndele los ejercicios de devoción, y los que disponen para ellas, como son: leer libros devotos, oír sermones y misa, y los oficios divinos, rezar algunas oraciones, como el rosario de nuestra Señora, o sus horas, y otras al santo Ángel de la guarda y a otros santos, comulgar a menudo, algún modo de meditación y oración mental, conforme a su capacidad, visitar algunas iglesias de especial devoción, o altares para ganar indulgencias y otras cosas semejantes.” On p. 105.

³⁷⁹ “Porque también en este sentido dijo el Espíritu Santo: ‘siete veces al día cae el justo, y se levanta;’ dando a entender que cuando cae tiene luz para conocer que ha caído; y si cae cuando es de día, no aguarda a levantarse a la noche; antes, si siete veces cae, siete veces se levanta luego que ha caído, doliéndose de la caída y proponiendo la enmienda; y de esta manera la frecuencia de las caídas se convertirá en frecuencia de oración y de buenos afectos y propósitos que reparen el daño de la caída con nueva gracia.” La Puente, *Meditaciones*, vol. I, p. 287.

on within a person and he considers this as a way to grow in perfection. La Puente associates the examen with the sacrament of confession as he values highly inner purity. In his treatise on perfection, he explicitly states the need for a good examination in order to confess well.³⁸⁰ From all that we have seen regarding the need for analysis of the thoughts, words and deeds, it is clear that La Puente talks of the examen in a moralistic sense. He proposes this practice as a way to get rid of sins through confession. In his detailed analysis of the whole aspects of understanding and will as well as that of senses contribute to greater understanding of the complexity involved in this process.

Though we can categorize the examen under moralistic one, what he treats with regard to the subtlety of human sensations and imaginative power does not strictly belong to that same category. This would more be in the ambit of discretion of spirits where the concern is to distinguish movements of the soul. Further, he treats the examen in relation to growing in self-knowledge by way of abnegation and self-denial. Here, though the emphasis is on getting rid of the vices and removal of sins, there is also the aspect of experiencing the mercy of God and not being pulled down by sins. When taken together with the diligent examination based on the complexities of understanding, will and other internal powers of people we have an exercise of prayer that moves beyond the moralistic boundary, to a spiritual realm.

10 Conclusion

We have seen that authors like La Palma, La Puente based themselves on the tradition of the Fathers of the Church to develop their spiritual teachings, while concern of some others was different – Suárez was defending the Society of Jesus from critics. Yet, we can see that there is a common factor that binds all these together: the examen was explained in the theological language of the existing culture – Cordeses chose the soul and

³⁸⁰ “Mas la confesión sacramental es voluntaria, porque ordena para el bien del penitente, para perdonarle sus pecados. Y así a él pertenece decirlos todos, sin ser preguntados, y al confesor no toca preguntar, sino en caso de que prudentemente juzgue que deja de confesar algún pecado. Lo cual puede proceder de una de cuatro raíces: o de ignorancia, o de no haber hecho bien examen de la conciencia, o de olvido, o de la malicia, oprimido de alguna vergüenza. Y para averiguar esto suele ser buen medio dejarle decir todo lo que trae pensado del modo quisiere, y de ello sacará noticia de lo que deja.” La Puente, *Tratado*, p. 61.

its capacities, Suárez focused on separating venial sin from mortal sin, Gagliardi dealt with the ways to purify affective levels, and so on.

Another common factor among all these authors whom we have studied is the quest for perfection. The writings of González Dávila, Rodríguez, La Palma, La Puente, and the life of Gonzaga are centred around perfection, though what each meant by perfection would differ. Canisius presented the examen to a larger audience through his works like Catechism where his effort was to help people develop a good conscience. And for him the examen was closely linked to the sacrament of confession, though in his personal life he employed the same to grow in perfection and holiness. González Dávila exhorted greater adherence to the Institute and the need for perfection in religious life and the life of Gonzaga is an example of a young Jesuit who strove for such a perfection. Rodríguez, on the other hand, advocated a perfect life through the practice of virtues and other spiritual exercises and we have seen that it is he, though citing the personal example and authority of Ignatius, who immortalizes the obligation of the examen even when one is indisposed for other spiritual activities. La Palma, in unambiguous words, recommended the examen in the path of spiritual journey, where an inquisition of sins during the daily examen was fundamental. In turn, La Puente saw the examen as a means to purify the soul at its multiple spheres and capacities, and a similar approach is also found in Cordeses who advocated affective prayer and employed scholastic categories to explain their merits.

Our analysis of the authors reveals that during this period, the uniqueness of the practice of the particular examen was highlighted, as we have seen that González Dávila does not hesitate to say that the particular examen was a special divine gift given to the Society of Jesus, through Ignatius. Through his emphasis on the king-vice and the specificity of the subject matter, the particular examen was presented as a solid ascetical practice indispensable to religious life.

It is no surprise that the majority of the authors we have considered are Spaniards owing to the fact that the Sixteenth century is considered the golden period. In such a context where Spanish mysticism was emerging as frontrunner, the Jesuit mystics like Antonio Cordeses, Diego Álvarez de Paz and Baltasar Álvarez left a deep impression.

Along this chapter we have seen that these second-generation Jesuits became a link between Ignatius and the rest of the Society and we would like to see what took place outside the Spanish world and that is what we hope to do in our next chapter.

Chapter 4

The Examen in the Century of Spirituality

1 Introduction

The seventeenth century is often termed as the century of spirituality and of mystics, and the Society of Jesus has had its share in this rich heritage, especially in developing what could be called as Jesuit mystic spirituality.¹ Etymologically mysticism implies a relation to mystery and is concerned with intimate union with God and since the Jesuit spirituality is often termed as apostolic – contemplatives in action – the contrast could not have been

¹ Zas Friz in his article on Ignatian mystical tradition demonstrates clearly the developments in Spain and France. See Rossano Zas Friz, “La tradición mística ignaciana: I. Autores españoles de los siglos XVI y XVII,” in *Manresa* 76 (2004) pp. 391-406 and “La tradición mística ignaciana (II): Autores franceses de los siglos XVI al XX,” in *Manresa* 77 (2005) pp. 325-342. Another earlier scholarly work of course is of Henri Bremond, *A Literary History of Religious Thought in France from the Wars of Religion down to Our Own Times*, (Trans. K.L. Montgomery) 3 vols., London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1928-1936. Bremond is called the historian of Jesuit mystical tradition, “Bremond was one of the architects of a scholarly account of mysticism, free of confessional slant and the filters of orders and congregations. At bottom, he was a historian of a Jesuit mystical tradition [...]. To examine his works and their impact is thus to study the historiography of this “Jesuit mystic spirituality,” in which he played so decisive a role; to create a space, alongside spirituality and theology, for the history of mysticism; and to investigate the contours not only of this Jesuit tradition but also of a Jesuit historiography of mysticism.” François Trémolières, “The Witness to These Witnesses”: Henri Bremond,” in Maryks, *A Companion to*, pp. 252-278, here p. 254.

greater with regard to mystical dimension of Jesuit spirituality. If the first century or so of the Jesuit Order is termed as ascetic² scholars point out that it was not without reason: there was a definite move towards specific type of prayer, the Directory was composed to ensure a sort of uniformity in the way the *Exercises* was interpreted and there was a clear shunning of mystical or contemplative style of prayer.³ Despite many censures, there existed a clear mystical tradition in the Society of Jesus, and along with Spain, France was undoubtedly the torchbearer.

In the previous chapter, we have seen the writings mainly of Spanish Jesuits and they advocated, or labelled as, rather an ascetic approach. The existing spiritual climate within the Society of Jesus could not easily be termed ascetical or mystical, rather there was clear tension between the spiritualism and the activism. In contrast, the general spiritual climate of seventeenth century French Jesuits were clearly in favour of more ‘interiority, towards contemplative prayer;⁴ the trend was so strong that the superior General Muzio Vitelleschi had to intervene to set right ‘the extremely dangerous tendencies.’⁵ There was demand for more interiority by the younger generation (not a new question in the Order, as the Spanish counterparts had demanded the same earlier), and the tendency continued well over a long period.⁶ Without making further judgments regarding the merits of the approach or of the response by the superiors, we would like to proceed to our concern – to gauge the role of the daily examen. It would be interesting to study how Jesuits in France, often in

² See Rob Faesen, “The Seventeenth Century Crisis of Mysticism in the Society of Jesus: The Analysis of Jean-Joseph Surin, S.J. (1600-1665),” in *Bijdragen, International Journal in Philosophy and Theology* 71/3 (2010) pp. 268-288, especially p. 268.

³ See for example what is termed as the Mercurian Project’ that studies all the developments around this period; see McCoog, *The Mercurian Project*.

⁴ The problem with Aquitaine Jesuits in this regard was that “Aquaviva was not sure if the Order was still on the right track after the spectacular growth it had enjoyed in the first decades of its existence. He was considering introducing reform and, to this end, he established a general inquiry into the *detrimenta* of the Order. Each province was asked to submit a report on the matter. The report of the Province of Aquitaine states that one of the points that were causing genuine damage to the Order was the lack of interior life among its members.” Faesen, “The Seventeenth Century,” p. 274.

⁵ See *ibid.*, pp. 273-274; Moshe Sluhosky, “Mysticism as an Existential Crisis: Jean-Joseph Surin,” in Maryks, *A Companion to*, pp. 139-165.

⁶ Zas Friz points out that there has been mystical tradition within the Society, though not always acknowledged. “En todo caso, el hecho de que haya una sucesión temporal de jesuitas que no se limitaron a enseñar los métodos propios de la tradición ignaciana estrictamente “oficial”, muestra precisamente la existencia de otra tradición ignaciana paralela, más o menos tolerada por la misma institución.” Zas Friz, “La tradición mística I,” p. 393.

dialogue with other spiritualities, practiced and taught the examen. All the same, not all the authors that we have chosen to study are representatives of this same phenomenon; we have also a prominent Italian Jesuit who has left his mark in mystical theology.

Another characteristic of this period of history is also the dialogue of Ignatian principles with other major spiritualities like the Carmelite, Berullian, and so on. It would be also interesting to verify our hypothesis – the examen in the crossroads of spirituality and morality – against such a background, with a major focus on French Jesuits.⁷

2 Louis Lallemand

Louis Lallemand was born on 1 November, 1588, in a noble family of Châlons-sur-Marne, France. He studied in a Jesuit school at Verdun and he joined the Society in 1605.⁸ After his priestly ordination in 1614, he was sent to Rouen and later to Paris where he taught, among other subjects, cases of conscience.⁹ He was rector and novice master at Rouen from 1622-1626 and tertian-instructor from 1626-1631. His great desire to work as a missionary was never materialized due to his fragile health, but he inspired many to undertake the same life.¹⁰ Lallemand died in 1635, at the age of forty-seven.¹¹

Lallemand's teaching is found in the work *Doctrine spirituelle*¹² where he clearly spells out the means to reach perfection in life. He organizes his teaching under seven principles and they are: 1) only God can make us truly happy: goal of our life; 2) the pursuit of the ideal of perfection: specially through sacraments and the practice of penance; 3)

⁷ Some writings of the French authors we deal are translations and not in the original language and this is because of our limitation with the language and not so much for lack of availability of the works in the original language.

⁸ Cf. John Patrick Donnelly, "Lallemand, Louis," in DHCJ vol. III, pp. 2267-2268, here p. 2267.

⁹ Lallemand taught philosophy, Maths, cases of Conscience while being also the spiritual director for the Jesuit scholastics.

¹⁰ As the novice master tertian instructor Lallemand inspired many to opt for missions and among these Isaac Jogues, Antoine Daniel, Jean de Brébeuf were outstanding. Other prominent Jesuits who were influenced by him include Jean-Joseph Surin, Julien Maunoir, Rigoleuc, Vincent Huby and Pierre Champion.

¹¹ See Tibor Bartók, "Louis Lallemand and his *Doctrine spirituelle*: Myths and Facts," in Maryks, *A Companion to*, pp. 112-138.

¹² Lallemand himself never published this doctrine and it was his students who took the notes and later published. Jean Rigoleuc and Pierre Champion were faithful in putting together what Lallemand taught. See Donnelly, "Lallemand, Louis," p. 2268.

purity of heart, 4) the need to be docile to the promptings of the Holy Spirit: working with the gifts and of fruits of the Holy Spirit; 5) leading an interior life of inner quiet, which is the only true source of peace; 6) to be united with our Lord by knowledge of his life and teachings, by love, and by imitation of his virtues, and 7) following an ordered and gradual spiritual life.

Lallemant bases his teachings on Ignatius of Loyola, Baltasar Álvarez, Teresa of Ávila, etc. His teaching can be clubbed under four major themes like second conversion, cautious activism, purity of heart and guidance by the Holy Spirit. The teachings of Lallemant occupies an important place in the Ignatian spirituality corpus and it is considered among profound mystical writings.¹³ Lallemant talks of the examen in his concept of purity of heart through penance and frequent reception of sacraments. The need for contemplation and the idea of being lost completely in infused contemplation are themes that stand out; we can talk of the mysticism of the interiority or an intimacy with God.¹⁴ In such a context it will be interesting to study how the practice of daily examen is presented.

2.1 The Examen in the *Doctrine spirituelle*

The basic assumptions of Lallemant are God as the beginning and end of everything and one can find happiness only in this author of all life and hence this happiness depends to the extend we submit ourselves to Him and allow Him to reign in our heart. Lallemant says that no creature can make humans happy and thus happiness and perfection come through the disposition of the heart. “nuestra perfección y nuestra dicha consisten en someternos de corazón a este imperio de Dios. Cuanto más nos sometemos a él más

¹³ See for example what Bartók comments about Lallemant’s mystical school while also acknowledging the work of Henri Bremond. “Thanks to Bremond, Lallemant’s Doctrine has often been viewed as a canonical statement of the mystical approach to Jesuit spirituality [...]. Yet, while Lallemant was certainly a mystic, the prevailing interpretation is based on a somewhat distorted view of his mysticism [...]. By liberating the figure and thought of Lallemant from the controversies in which they became embroiled, it becomes clear that Lallemant did not establish a distinctive “mystical school,” as mystical ideas were common in the Society of Jesus and beyond during his lifetime.” Bartók, “Louis Lallemant and,” pp.112-113.

¹⁴ See Crispin Mukiay, “Luis Lallemant, maestro y místico de la interioridad y unión con Dios,” in *Manresa* 85 (2013) pp. 79-91.

perfectos y felices seremos.”¹⁵ For Lallemand, the more one renounces oneself to be united with God the farther one is from misery and consequently closer to happiness.

The greatest happiness and perfection of humans is to look for the glory of God: to look for God himself in all things and this is the first act of a soul that looks for perfection. According to Lallemand, when one possesses God nothing else matters to him/her and such a perfection can be reached after much purification. For he says, “para la perfección es una gran ventaja servir a Dios con un alma generosa y un corazón entero y sin reservas,” and “los principales medios prácticos de la perfección son los Sacramentos, cuando ponemos en ello la preparación necesaria. Los sacramentos dan las gracias que tienden a producir en nosotros los efectos que les son propios: la confesión, una gran pureza de corazón; la comunión, una estrecha unión con Dios y un gran fervor de espíritu en nuestras acciones.”¹⁶ Lallemand places the examen precisely in this purificatory stage; for him purification and perfection always go hand in hand,¹⁷ for he says “most saints and religious who arrive at perfection generally undergo two conversions: one by which they give themselves up to the service of God; the other by which they devote themselves entirely to perfection.”¹⁸

For Lallemand the first means towards the attainment of perfection is purity of heart, and for him it consists in having nothing, even in small degree, opposed to God and for actualizing his grace. He believed that never in our life shall we attain God until we have

¹⁵ Luis Lallemand, *Doctrina espiritual* (nueva edición de Dominique Salin/ José A. García), Bilbao/ Santander/ Madrid: Mensajero/ Sal Terrae/ UPCo, 2017, p. 74.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 82, 85.

¹⁷ Talking about the importance of purification, Aloys Pottier the first to edit Lallemand’s work, comments, “his great maxim was, that our advancement in perfection is in proportion to the progress we make in purity of heart; that this is the shortest and the surest way of arriving at divine union, and the infallible means of disposing ourselves for large communications from God. This he knew by his own experience; and there was nothing to which he more applied himself than to keep his soul pure, not willingly suffering the least spot which might be displeasing to the eyes of God. It was for this reason that he kept a continual watch over his own interior, that he examined so carefully all the movements of his heart and confessed every day with the greatest exactness.” Louis Lallemand, *Spiritual Doctrine (The Spiritual Doctrine of Father Louis Lallemand of the Company of Jesus, preceded by some account of his life)*; translated from French. Edited by Frederick William Faber, London: Burns & Lambert, 1855, p. 8. Hereafter this work will be cited as *Spiritual Doctrine*. We make use of the English translation which contains all the articles (in the Spanish translation many articles are omitted). And when it is present in both editions we use the corresponding number in the following sequence: Principles-Chapters-Articles.

¹⁸ Lallemand, *Spiritual Doctrine*, p. 83.

corrected, cut off, or destroyed everything that is contrary to God.¹⁹ Emphasising the importance of purifying the heart by devoting all our energy, Lallemand says,

we must devote our whole care to the purifying of our heart, because there lies the root of all our evils. To be able to conceive how requisite purity of heart is to us, it would be necessary fully to comprehend the natural corruption of the human heart. There is in us a very depth of malice, which we do not perceive, because we never seriously examine our own interior. If we did, we should find therein a multitude of desires and irregular appetites for the honours, the pleasures, and the comforts of the world unceasingly fermenting in our heart.²⁰

A heart that is cleansed²¹ through such an examination is filled by God with his powers²² and thus purity of heart leads to union with God.

In this process of purification of heart, the examen helps to know one's sins and attachments because it was the shortest and the surest way of attaining perfection: "el camino más corto y seguro para llegar a la perfección, es dedicarnos a la pureza de corazón con más empeño que a cualquier otro ejercicio de las virtudes; porque Dios está dispuesto a concedernos toda clase de gracias con tal de que no le pongamos obstáculos."²³ It is by purifying the heart that we clear away everything that hinders the work of God and prepares way for the grace of God, even before we practice virtues.²⁴

A ninguna de las prácticas de la vida espiritual se opone tanto el demonio como al trabajo para conseguir la pureza de corazón. No deja hacer algunos actos exteriores de virtud,

¹⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.

²¹ "We are so full of false ideas and erroneous judgments, of disorderly affections, passions, and malice, that we should stand confounded at ourselves, could we see ourselves such as we are. Let us imagine ourselves a muddy well, from which water is continually being drawn: at first, what comes up is scarcely anything but mud; but by dint of drawing, the well is gradually cleansed, and the water becomes purer, until at last it is as clear as crystal. In like manner, by labouring incessantly to purge our soul, the ground of it becomes gradually cleared, and God manifests His presence by powerful and marvellous effects which He works in the soul, and through it, for the good of others." *Ibid.*, p. 97.

²² Lallemand is of the opinion that "When the heart is thoroughly cleansed, God fills the soul and all its powers, the memory, the understanding, and the will, with His holy presence and love. Thus purity of heart leads to union with God, and no one ordinarily attains thereto by other means." *Ibid.*

²³ *Prin.* III/Ch. I/Art. II/II.

²⁴ Lallemand believes that such a cleansing is required even for the practice of virtues, as he says "without an abundant supply of grace, we shall never do any excellent acts of virtue and we shall never obtain this abundant supply, till we have thoroughly purged our heart. But when once we have reached this perfect purity of heart, we shall practise those virtues, an opportunity for which is furnished us; and with respect to others, an opportunity of which may not occur, we shall possess the spirit, and so to say, the essence of them, which is what God principally requires for it is very possible to perform an act of some particular virtue without possessing its spirit and essence." *Prin.* III/Ch. I/Art. II/III.

[...] porque a veces con esto nos quedamos satisfechos y no sirve más que para engreírnos, y para acallar el remordimiento interior de la conciencia; pero no puede soportar que fijemos los ojos en nuestro corazón, que examinemos sus desordenes y que nos apliquemos a corregirlos.²⁵

From this it becomes clear that for Lallemand, purity and examen are closely connected.

The order in which the purification has to take place, as outlined by Lallemand is different from the steps of the examen that Ignatius proposed. He says, “el orden que hay que seguir para purificar el corazón, es, primeramente, darnos cuenta de los pecados veniales y corregirlos. Segundo observar los movimientos desordenados de nuestro corazón y ordenarlo. Tercero, vigilar los pensamientos y regularlos. Cuatro, conocer las inspiraciones de Dios, sus designios, su voluntad y animarse para cumplirlos.”²⁶ There are four degrees of purity and each is attained by practice of some virtues. The first is to free oneself of actual sins and comply with the due penalty. The second is to get rid of evil habits as well as disordered affections. The third is to free oneself from the original corruption called *fomes peccati*. The fourth is to shake off the weakness – the *defectibility* – that is natural to us.²⁷ Lallemand proposes various means to reach such a state of perfection: purification from sins through practice of penance; mortification and practice of other virtues in order to get away from evil habits; the sacraments are meant to attain the third degree of perfection; while the fourth grade is achieved through union with God.²⁸

While pointing out the possible deceptions and traps on the way to perfection, Lallemand proposes the use of the examen precisely to discover the obstacles proposed by the devil. In the practice of docility to the guidance of the Spirit, the enemy may propose different means and according to the reactions of people, the enemy misleads, always by putting up new obstacles. In the words of Lallemand,

²⁵ Prin. III/Ch. I./Art. II/IV.

²⁶ Prin. III/Ch. I./Art. III/I.

²⁷ See Prin. III/Ch. I./Art. III/II.

²⁸ “The first degree is attained mainly by penance. The second, by mortification and the exercise of the other virtues. The third, by the sacraments, which operate within us the grace of our renewal. The fourth, by our union with God, who being our beginning and the source of our being, can alone strengthen us against the weaknesses to which our nothingness of itself draws us down. A soul may attain to a degree of purity at which it has such complete dominion over its imagination and its powers, that they have no longer any exercise, except in the service of God.” Lallemand, *Spiritual Doctrine*, pp. 99-100.

no se puede imaginar como el demonio impide nuestro adelantamiento espiritual. Constantemente está engañando a algunos con ciertas penas, con alguna tristeza, con algún escrúpulo o con cualquier otra mala disposición. Cuando ve que los primeros ataques tienen éxito, sigue con otros, reteniéndonos siempre con algún nuevo proyecto, deseo o esperanza para entretenernos y alejarnos del camino de Dios y del cuidado de nuestra perfección.²⁹

The way in which the devil deals with beginners is different from those who are advanced: the beginners are prevented from doing good or are made to lessen the good work; on the contrary the ones who are perfect are always attacked with disturbances.³⁰ In all these Lallemand exhorts constant vigilance and examination of one's spiritual state.

Further, when a person is moving in greater perfection, the devil proposes more – may be even stronger – attachments and the person may be misled totally from the perfection. Lallemand rightly points out that to such people the examination is a great help:

para esto, se sirve de las ocasiones que se presentan, del recuerdo de las cosas pasadas, de las noticias que se oyen, de los objetos que impresionan los sentidos, de nuestro carácter y de nuestras pasiones, haciendo jugar todos estos distintos resortes, tan pronto como otro, para tener nuestro entendimiento y nuestro corazón ocupados con alguna bagatela, en la que nos detenemos, o con pensamientos y reflexiones inútiles, o vanos deseos o temores, o con cualquier otro movimiento de pasiones inmortificadas. Más adelante nos hará encontrar parecidos o mayores apegos, iguales o más peligrosos obstáculos de modo que si no tenemos cuidado, nos tendrá durante toda nuestra vida miserablemente inclinados hacia cualquier cosa que no sea Dios [...]. Para apartarnos de esta desgracia, examinémonos cuidadosamente, fijándonos a que objetos se inclinan más nuestros pensamientos, qué es lo que más ocupa nuestro corazón y qué pasiones turban con mas frecuencia nuestra paz interior. Y después de haberlo reconocido, arranquémoslo prontamente como una invención clara del enemigo que nos quiere perder.³¹

²⁹ Prin. IV/ Ch. VI/ Art. I.

³⁰ Lallemand explains the tactics that the devil uses according to the spiritual state of each person. About the devils' strategy he says "The way in which the devil deals with beginners is either to prevent the good they do, or to diminish it, or to change it into some less good, or such as is only apparent, or into something prejudicial, or above their strength, or too elevated for the present disposition of their soul. His artifice with perfect souls is to keep them in a state of disturbance, never leaving them any repose to the end that, having tired and wearied them, he may at last turn them away, if possible, from their close application to God, fill their heart with sadness and discouragement, enfeeble them in the practice of good, and lead them to relaxation and tepidity. There are persons whom the devil does not prevent from doing much good, because the good they do serves to deceive them. His first attacks are directed to casting souls into mortal sin; but if he sees he cannot succeed in his design, he changes his mode of assault, and leads them to commit many venial sins in the good they do. Having weakened them by this means, he has little difficulty, in the end, in making them fall into some mortal offence." Prin. IV/ Ch. VI/ Art. II/I, II.

³¹ Ibid.

Highlighting the strategy of the devil, Lallemand presents the examen in order to consider if our desire is truly to advance in perfection and if the examen reveals the contrary, one is to make all effort to attain the holy disposition.

Lallemand maintains that other than helping to identify the attachments that become obstacle in the progress of perfection, the examen also helps to clearly see the working of the Holy Spirit. The gift of wisdom comes from the Spirit and with its help one can detect the movements of the soul whether it is moving towards God or towards evil.

Si queremos conocer si somos del número de los sabios o de los locos, examinemos nuestros gustos y nuestras repugnancias, ya sea hacia Dios y las cosas divinas o del lado de las criaturas y las cosas de la tierra. ¿De dónde brotan nuestras satisfacciones y nuestros contratiempos? ¿En qué encuentra reposo y contento nuestro corazón? Esta clase de examen es un medio excelente para adquirir la pureza de corazón. Debíamos hacernos familiar, examinando con frecuencia durante el día nuestras inclinaciones y tratando de dirigir las poco a poco hacia a Dios.³²

The great advantage of prayer is true detachment, and a person who is fully immersed in prayer is not afflicted by any calamities, for he is protected. The importance Lallemand gives to repentance and confession underlines the importance of examen.

Cuando uno se ha entregado totalmente a Dios por la vida de oración, ya no se preocupa ni de las calumnias ni de nada de lo más molestias que pueda sucederle. [...] no les hace ningún daño porque no pueden atravesar la coraza. Y lo mismo le sucede a un hombre de oración cuando es perseguido por la maledicencia: si examinándose se encuentra culpable, lo reconoce y pide perdón; si es inocente, bendice a Dios por tener ocasión de sufrir por Jesucristo.³³

Emphasizing the importance of union with God, Lallemand talks of a diligent examen in order not be deceived by apparent good actions, for they could also be occasion for self-seeking. He exhorts people to practice the examen precisely to evaluate the true motive of actions: “si nos examinamos bien, tal vez encontraremos en nuestra alma tan poca unión con Dios, y en los servicios que hacemos al prójimo tanto imperio del amor propio que tendremos motivos para desconfiar de que hagamos a los demás todo el bien que nos

³² Prin. IV/ Ch. IV/ Art. I.

³³ Prin. VIII/ C. I/ Art. I.

imaginamos y para suponer que no hacemos a nosotros mismos mucho más mal de lo que creemos.”³⁴

Lallemant proposes a similar examination in the context of deepening interior life and with the aim of finding out the source of evil and attachments that later become obstacles in the path towards perfection. In the Fifth Principle, where he discusses the nature and causes of the interior life, Lallemant points out that interior life consists in two sorts of acts in thoughts and in affections. For him, the good and bad religious differ from each other in the nature of their thoughts, their judgement and affections, and therefore it is vital to observe and examine them, “por ello debemos vigilar con gran cuidado nuestro interior y poner una continua atención para ajustar nuestros juicios a la verdad y subordinar nuestros afectos a la caridad.”³⁵

Precisely in such an interior life the examen plays the role of verifying the source of movements; it is important to ascertain the disposition of the heart.

Una de las ocupaciones de la vida interior consiste en examinar y reconocer particularmente tres clases de cosas en nuestro mundo íntimo: *Primero*, lo que viene de nuestro propio fondo: nuestros pecados y malos hábitos, nuestras pasiones e inclinaciones, nuestros deseos y pensamientos, nuestros juicios y sentimientos. *Segundo* lo que viene del demonio: sus tentaciones, sugerencias y artificios, y las ilusiones con que trata de seducirnos si no tenemos cuidado. *Tercero*, lo que viene de Dios: sus luces e inspiraciones, los movimientos de su gracia, sus designios sobre nosotros y los caminos por donde nos quiere conducir. En todo esto hay que ver cómo nos conducimos y ajustar nuestra conducta al espíritu de Dios.³⁶

Lallemant goes on to say that one should not just go on meditating but stop to examine this way to find the direction of the movements. When he says we must carefully observe to what the Spirit is leading and in what we resist the most, it is clear that he alludes to the examen: “no debemos emplear todo nuestro tiempo de recogimiento en la oración y en la lectura; conviene dedicar una parte a examinar la disposición de nuestro corazón, a darnos

³⁴ Prin. V/ C.III/ Arti. II/v.

³⁵ Prin. V/ C.I/ Art. I/I.

³⁶ Prin. V/ C.I/ Art. I/IV.

cuenta de lo que pasa en él y a discernir lo que es de Dios, lo que es de la naturaleza y lo que es del demonio; a conformarnos con la dirección del Espíritu Santo.”³⁷

For Lallemand such an evaluation is important because this also leads to great purity of heart and subsequently to union with God by cooperating with his grace.³⁸ Discussing the ways in which to distinguish between the operation of God and that of devil Lallemand says that even the movements that lead us to good are to be noted. He insists that we must examine with what readiness we have followed them, whether with our whole strength both of mind and body; by what motive we have been led in so doing, and for what end; and whether in the progress of the action we have maintained the fervour and purity of intention with which we set out, etc.³⁹ The different artifices of the devil to deceive include illusions, creating confusion, subtle self-seeking, etc. and therefore the constant need to observe and examen everything.⁴⁰

Lallemand insists on the observation of inner movements when he says,

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ “La esencia de la vida espiritual e interior consiste en dos cosas: por una parte, en las operaciones de Dios en el alma, en las luces que iluminan el entendimiento y en las operaciones que mueven la voluntad: y por otra, en la cooperación del alma a las luces y movimientos de la gracia. De tal modo que para tratar con Dios y disponerse a recibir de El mayores y más frecuentes comunicaciones, es preciso tener gran pureza de corazón, gran fuerza de espíritu y una constante e inviolable fidelidad en cooperar con Dios y en seguir los movimientos de su espíritu a cualquier parte que nos lleve.” Prin. V/ Ch. I/Art. I/III.

³⁹ Lallemand talks of the importance of observing the entire process, just like in the rules of discernment that Ignatius proposes in [333]. Lallemand says, “for it happens but too often that we undertake some good work for a truly holy end, but scarcely have we begun when we lose sight of that end, or keep our eyes only half fixed upon it. Vanity, interest, and self-seeking glide insensibly into the heart. We relax little by little, we get tired, we allow ourselves to yield to the impulse of a natural inconstancy; so that it is rarely that we finish with the same ardour and the same purity of intention with which we had begun.” Lallemand, *Spiritual Doctrine*, p. 208 (Princ. IV/ Ch. VI/ Art. VI).

⁴⁰ In the IV article Lallemand lists out the possible deceptions by the devil and exhorts to examen everything carefully. He talks about secret illusions through irregular movements in our heart; looking for reasons to justify our passion; lack of application in correcting our faults; etc. “It sometimes happens that when God gives us the light and the inspiration of His grace to correct us of certain faults to which we are subject, we turn our thoughts another way; we apply ourselves to some other action of virtue, and practise a deception upon God, in order to avoid the stings and reproaches of our conscience, escape the shame which the sight of our fault would cause us, and delude ourselves agreeably with the persuasion of our own virtue. But we shall never attain to this holy liberty, this largeness of heart, which we are seeking, unless we correct ourselves of the faults which God makes known to us.” By asking to undertake a diligent examen Lallemand points out the important role such an examen plays in observing the movements of the heart. This in turn would help to have purity of heart and perfection in life. Cf. Princ. IV/ C. VI/ Art. III, IV.

no llegaremos nunca a una perfecta pureza de conciencia, si no vigilamos de tal manera todos los movimientos de nuestro corazón y todos nuestros pensamientos, que no se nos escape apenas nada de que no podamos dar cuenta a Dios y que no tienda a conseguir su gloria; [...]. Es raro conseguir la plena victoria sobre nuestros movimientos desordenados: casi nunca llegamos a dominar uno tan perfectamente que no se nos escape algo o que no nos quede aún más poco, ya sea por falta de atención o a defecto de una resistencia suficientemente enérgica.⁴¹

Therefore, Lallemand recommends an ever-watchful habit so as not to miss even the slightest sins and once we realize we have committed some sins we are to repent and correct it. Lallemand is of the opinion that such a person who has the knowledge of even the irregular movements of the heart – one who has inward purity – does not even need to make the particular examen. “Algunos no necesitan de hacer examen particular porque no cometen ni la menor falta sin que sea prontamente aperecibida y reprimida, pues caminan siempre bajo luz del Espíritu Santo que los conduce. Estos son raros, y hacen, por así decirlo, un examen particular de todo.”⁴² Lallemand correctly points out that such a degree of perfection is possible only for a few and hence the particular examen must be used to reach the desired perfection.

2.2 Observations

Lallemand’s seven spiritual principles focus on spiritual perfection that is achieved through purity of heart, docility to the Spirit, interior recollection and union with God. From the manner in which Lallemand proposes the examen we can observe two areas wherein he visualizes its role: in purity of heart and in interiority. As we have seen, purity of heart consists in having nothing which is opposed to God and his grace, and the examen and sacramental confession are means to reach such a level of purity. The focus of the third principle is purifying the heart, as heart is the root of all evil. The concern, according to this principle, is to get rid of venial sins, the removal of all self-seeking as well as imperfections and disordered attachments through a diligent and watchful examen. This clearly indicates that the type of examen that Lallemand proposes is one of moralistic. In the next principle, where Lallemand deals with the examen, the focus is quite different, and

⁴¹ Prin. IV/ Ch. III/ Art. VII.

⁴² Ibid.

this is clear from the importance he gives to observation of inner movements. The constant watchfulness of the interior life, even the irregular movements of the heart that could gradually lead away the soul, demand a greater perfection. By invoking the rules of the discernment in order to clearly observe what goes on in one's interiority Lallemand advocates a spiritual discerning examen. Though in these principles he does not talk explicitly of such an examen we are of the opinion that Lallemand does not talk of moralistic examen. On the contrary, the need for greater vigilance of inner movements, use of prudence in distinguishing between actions of God and of devil, etc. point to a spiritual examen.

3 Jean-Joseph Surin

Jean-Joseph Surin was born in Bordeaux in 1600 to a family of *parlementaires* – people connected with the local court.⁴³ He grew up in an environment of intense Catholic spirituality and his mother was involved in charitable works, especially affiliated with the Carmelites. Surin joined the Jesuit novitiate at the very young age of 16 when he was studying with the Jesuits in Bordeaux.⁴⁴ After completion of novitiate, Surin had an year of juniorate and then he did his philosophy and theology. Owing to ill-health he had to interrupt the study of theology for two years – from 1625-1627 – at College de Clermont and was ordained a priest in 1626.⁴⁵ He did his tertianship in 1629 at Rouen under Louis Lallemand who left a lasting influence on Surin. From 1634 to 1637 Surin was the exorcist at the Ursuline Convent of Loudun, an experience that changed the course of his life.⁴⁶ And the subsequent twenty years or so were significant when he made great spiritual progress,

⁴³ See Sluhosky, "Mysticism," p.140.

⁴⁴ See Michel Olphe-Galliard, "Surin, Jean-Joseph," in *DHCJ* vol. IV, pp. 3671-3673.

⁴⁵ Surin had very fragile health and so he was allowed special routine while in novitiate, whereas during theology he had to take two years of break from studies to be in his native Bordeaux to rejuvenate. See *ibid.*, p. 3672.

⁴⁶ During the exorcism Surin wrote a large number of letters that help to reconstruct his exorcismal theology and practice. What is noteworthy is the fact that Surin believed in persuasion of the possessed soul to devote itself to prayer and penitence more than combatting the devil with the existing apparatus of exorcism. He believed that the 'inner path,' consisting of virtues of interior life and divine love would win the hearts and affection of souls. Cf. Sluhosky, "Mysticism," p. 143. See also Zas Friz, "La tradición mística (II)," pp. 329ff.

especially of mystical nature.⁴⁷ His spiritual doctrines talk about the need for purity of heart as a necessary condition for union with God. He had special devotion to St. Joseph whom he considered as the protector of contemplatives and mystics.⁴⁸ Surin died in 1665 in Bordeaux.

3.1 The Daily Examen in the Teachings of Surin

Jean Joseph Surin's thoughts on the examen are found mainly in *Guide Spirituel* and *Les fondements de la vie spirituelle, tirés du livre de l'Imitation de Jésus-Christ*. The central themes of Surin were, among others, perfection in spiritual life, purity of heart and familiarity with God, and it is no surprise that he presents the practice of the examen as means to reach perfection in spiritual life.⁴⁹

3.1.1 The Three Categories of People

On the outset we can say that Surin defines the examen as a reflection made on one's soul: "c'est une reflexion que l'âme fait sur soi-même pour connaître ses défauts, s'en repentir, s'en humilier et s'en amender."⁵⁰ Surin categories the people who practice the examen into three groups: the beginners, the more perfect and the most virtuous. The first category is indifferent as they lack fervour in serving God. They not only are careless about the examen, but also easily give up important things during the day. They are victims

⁴⁷ Being the exorcist Surin brought peace to the convent but he suffered possessions and from depressions, attempted a suicide by jumping out of the window from second floor of the house (1645). In the years that followed saw slow recovery (he suffered for nearly 20 years), and during this period he had visions and great spiritual mystical experiences. See the introduction in Jean Joseph Surin, *The Foundations of the Spiritual Life: Drawn from the Book of the Imitation of Jesus Christ*, London: James Burns, 1844, pp. lxvi. Hereafter it will be cited as *The Foundations*. See also Olphe-Galliard, "Surin, Jean-Joseph," p. 3672.

⁴⁸ See Rob Faesen, "The Seventeenth Century." See also the letter written to Lallemand in Sluhosky, "Mysticism," pp. 151ff.

⁴⁹ In a letter written to Jeanne des Anges at Loudun, Surin talks about perfection and need for total abandoning to God: "We must bear in mind that the well-being and perfection of a man consists in his being filled by God, and in his having God for the first principle of all his actions. This is brought about by grace; and the more man is submissive to grace, the more beneficially he participates in the happiness of being, in all things, filled by God. Now he cannot attain to this easily, on account of the corruption of nature, which rebels against this perfect submission to grace. Thus, when the soul has once determined to belong altogether to God, she must, with her own efforts, assisted by grace, mortify all she finds in herself contrary to God, such as vices, passions, impetuositities, and generally all that passes for disorderly in the opinion of wise men." Letter dated 20 december 1658; translation from Sluhosky, "Mysticism," p. 159.

⁵⁰ Jean-Joseph Surin, *Guide spirituel pour la perfection*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1963, p. 172.

of distractions about many occupations they have had and such concerns of the past easily distract them from focusing on God.

Similarly, the more perfect ones have, though having the same occupations, are centred on God and “les personnes qui vivent dans l’amour de Dieu et dans une perfection plus grande que le commun ont presque un même effet que les premières, c’est-à-dire que, dans un clin d’œil, notre Seigneur leur fait voir s’il y a quelque défaut en eux; ils s’en humilient, puis une flamme de son amour vient qui dévore leurs manquements, et demeurent après absorbés en son amour, passant le reste de leur temps à l’aimer.”⁵¹

The third type, those who have great desire to perfect themselves take up the practice of the examen in such a way that they see not just if they have committed any serious sin, but how they have made progress in certain virtues which they may have had made resolution.

non seulement ils regardent s’ils ont commis quelque faute extraordinaire, mais ils jettent les yeux sur le propos qu’ils ont de profiter en certaines vertus ou perfections qui leur sont nécessaires, et voient s’ils ont manqué contre ce propos et considèrent comment ils ont été exacts à se maintenir dans les bonnes dispositions qu’ils désirent. Par exemple, ils examinent comment ils se sont comportés en la recollection, comment en la mortification et au dégagement de cœur qu’il veulent chose de ce dessein entrepris depuis tel temps, et cela conformément à leur oraison. Car, à ces gens-là l’oraison, l’examen, la communion vont d’un même train et tendent à mêmes choses; autrement, ils ne sauraient obtenir aucun bon effet notable.⁵²

Surin is of the opinion that for such people the focus of the examen should be to what extent they have been faithful in their desire to achieve perfection, how they have been faithful in meditation and mortification, the extent to which they were detached, etc. And, such perfection is intimately linked to the particular examen.

Based on the subject matter that Surin deals with, to facilitate our analysis we divide them into aspects related to getting away from attachments and discerning the inner movements.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 172-173.

⁵² Ibid., p. 173.

3.1.2 Away from Attachments

One of the first principles that Surin proposes for perfection in spiritual life is a total detachment from affections, because, argues Surin, disordered affections make people look for pleasures of life. For him then, the foundation of spiritual life lies in ‘walking inwardly with God, away from outward affections.’⁵³ In the process of such detachment i.e. in interiority⁵⁴ the practice of examen has a vital role: to keep away from outward affections. He terms such persons as truly spiritual who are dead to all that flatters the senses,⁵⁵ and what is required is that “we should be so entirely detached from all that is external, as never to take a single step in order to see anything, however new or delightful, to which we are not induced by the consideration of some service to God. Even then we should carefully examine our motive, lest it should be a pretext to colour our self-love. We must go direct to God, and so fix our eyes upon His glory, as never to follow a certain natural excitement whereby most men are guided.”⁵⁶ Thus, Surin points out that the examen helps people guard against the charms of the world.⁵⁷

Commenting on another principle of spiritual life, that of surrendering, Surin lists three ways of doing it: depriving oneself of all temporal goods; loving God after

⁵³ Surin comments on the verse (quoting from *Imitation of Christ*, B. ii. c. 6) “to walk inwardly with God, and not to be kept abroad by any outward affection, is the state of spiritual man.” For him this means to be occupied internally with God by: continual attention to the Presence of God; to do everything depending on God; and to be in the presence of God through some practices of piety. Cf. Surin, *The Foundations*, pp. 1ff.

⁵⁴ Surin defines those who are termed as interior as the ones who are ‘always occupied with themselves always on the watch to correct some defect, to purify themselves more and more, to grow in holiness, to walk in the presence of God, and to cherish familiarity with the Saints.’ Whereas others ‘satisfy themselves with the performance of duties to which they are strictly obliged, and from which they cannot reasonably be exempted. They join in prayer with tolerable attention, they go to the Choir at stated hours; and watch sufficiently over themselves to guard against committing gross sins; but beyond this they pass their lives softly, forming no lofty schemes for improvement, and making no extraordinary exertions to attain to perfection.’ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁵ “It is to take no interest in all that is without: it is to be insensible, and as it were dead, to all that is external, however fascinating it may be, except as far as it may tend to the glory and service of God.” *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵⁷ Those who lack perfection, who do not faithfully practice the examen are easily taken over by external charm. “The world is filled with persons lamentably remote from this degree of perfection. Objects of sense have charms which win them; if the work which they are about pleases them, they cannot leave it. They must not then be called interior men, for this disordered affection makes them love to go out of themselves. That it rules in their heart is evident, for on occasion of a mere nothing it raises a great tumult within them and the strongest stirrings of the soul.” *Ibid.*, p. 4.

abandoning all attachments; and to forsake oneself.⁵⁸ In such graded process of perfection, especially that of forsaking oneself, Surin thinks that the examen has an important role to play. For he says,

can one who has not attained this perfect liberty, think himself in a state to enjoy the Presence of God, while the least mote is capable of troubling the eye, and hindering it from beholding its Object? Here is matter to occupy a man who aspires to eternal happiness. Let him often examine himself, that if he discovers any too human affection, any attachment, however slight, binding him to creatures, he may quickly rid himself of it, for otherwise his work will never be ended.⁵⁹

The examen is a means to check the degree of perfection⁶⁰ in forsaking oneself, thereby loving God alone and seek to do His will, for, total surrender is an absolute necessity. He terms such people who surrender totally as truly devout: those who resolve to live well, and think only of increasing in virtue, and becoming ever more closely united with God. But, however devout one is, there is a chance for self-love and there is need for examining because of the contradictions and hindrances within a person:

There are some who make a profession of serving God, who appear good sort of people, and are so in fact, but who yet are not all which would entitle us to be called devout. The perfectly devout are those who, not only in idea, but in practice, prefer nothing to the honour of God, and the accomplishment of His Holy will, above all, in what concerns their own perfection. [...] How many Christians do we see living in great tranquillity, and apparently prospering in all things! They are esteemed, praised, and preferred above others; they are well satisfied with themselves, and when they reflect on the state of their affairs, they perceive nothing but prosperity and peace. But if they thoroughly examine their own hearts, they must acknowledge that they have not yet firmly resolved to give themselves up wholly to our Lord, and to place their whole joy and happiness in Him.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Depriving oneself of all temporal goods is to 'sell everything' before following God. The second is to place God before all relations and the third principle is abandoning oneself, the most perfect way. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 14ff.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁶⁰ In forsaking oneself and removing all attachments Surin proposes the examen to have greater purity. "For if he still feels a strong unwillingness to quit them, though resolved to do so, he may believe that he has a desire to do well; but this natural inclination to live with our friends, and this difficulty in leaving them, are a sign that he has not yet acquired the true spirit of interior destitution, and that his heart is not detached from all; for if this were the case, he would be equally satisfied with every place, and with all sorts of persons: he would avoid all engagements and reject everything which might diminish his freedom. For, to be wholly free, we must love no good, no employment, nor even any man soever, except with a view to the greater service of God." *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

Thus, Surin places the examen as a means to reach perfection by being devout and totally giving oneself to things of God.⁶²

Talking about the importance of giving oneself totally to inward things Surin states that having God present within oneself as well as regulating the whole interior⁶³ help people grow closer to God:

to apply ourselves to the internal life, is to examine carefully all that passes within ourselves, to reflect profoundly on it, and never to indulge in the least irregularity or a shade of carelessness. Those who know nothing of the inward life do not trouble themselves about the state of their conscience; they totally neglect it, particularly when anything happens which draws their thoughts outward. But the others dwell at home, watch unceasingly over themselves, and are always most careful, 1st, to walk always as in the sight of God; 2nd, to do nothing which may be displeasing to Him; 3rd, to say nothing unbecoming; 4th, in all things to follow the motions of grace, and to respond faithfully to the inspirations of Heaven.⁶⁴

While observing that an interior person is one who maintains his/her soul close and in continual communion with God, Surin points out that the first principle and foundation of interior life is keeping God as everything – there is nothing greater than God.⁶⁵ then for such people, what matters is not his/her own thoughts, capacities or honour but to find happiness in God; one learns to balance his/her affections and at the same time to renounce everything. In the words of Surin,

the quickest means of attaining to moderation in these circumstances, is to renounce self entirely, in order to be conformed to Jesus suffering; it is greatly to despise everything

⁶² While talking about growing in virtue Surin points out that the holy are often tested by God. “[...] from the moment that a person conceives the design of devoting himself wholly to God, a thousand tempests arise against him. Hence it appears, that too great a calm is not a good sign. And this because our nature, always passionately desirous of pleasure, cannot die to itself, or reach any high degree of holiness, except through suffering.” Surin proposes that one often examine the cause of even apparent tranquillity. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 39ff.

⁶³ According to Surin, giving to things inward means “in the first place, it is to have God present with us. For the presence of God calms the mind, and prevents the wanderings of the heart. In the second place, it is so to regulate our interior, that all may be in order, and that we do not resemble those whose heads are ever full of vague and changing thoughts, who form an endless number of useless desires and projects, and who thereby bring on themselves a great confusion of thought; after which, finding their minds a chaos of disorder and confusion, they throw themselves more and more on outward things [...]. Those who wish to abide in peace, and to be ever united with God, must begin then by bringing all the powers of their soul into subjection, and well-ordering its functions.” *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ “[...] it is a strong conviction that there is nothing great but God; which causes us to have Him ever in our heart, and to bear constantly with us the only Object of our joy, our fear, our hopes, and our desires.” *Ibid.*, p. 140.

merely human, to accustom ourselves to seek God fervently, to employ our prayers, our examinations of conscience, our communions, to form this habit, and to labour at it unceasingly, till we have attained to complete detachment from worldly things, after which we shall no more have anything to desire or to seek in this life. Let men think, speak, and judge, as they please; their words, thoughts, and judgments, however unjust and disadvantageous, will be but like the heavy rain of a storm which falls on the house-roof without abiding there.⁶⁶

Thus, for Surin, the examen, along with other spiritual practices help one to detach from passions and to grow in closer union with God.

Surin considers two things in order to possess God, namely to build on God⁶⁷ and to attach oneself to Him constantly. A total submission in the hands of God is what one achieves, then, through such practices, always in proportion to one's fervour. Those who build on God move away from their natural inclinations and hence Surin proposes:

by being always watchful over themselves, and trying to do nothing on natural impulse, nor by a secret movement of self-love, which it is impossible to discover without careful observation. Interior and fervent men are not thus deceived, for they apply themselves most diligently to examine their very smallest actions, to consider what spirit moves them, what motive leads them to act, what is the end at which they aim. What they principally desire is, to make the Glory of God their great end, and to be mortified in all their works, without any mixture of vanity, curiosity, or sensual pleasure.⁶⁸

Surin terms such an examen possible for those who are truly spiritual and he sees this as a practice of seeking God in everything. And this practice should be done regularly in order to remain united with God.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ To build on God is to "regard God with a single eye; to look to Him with an upright intention, without ever turning aside to creatures. But this is not done by those who act on impulse, and who follow the inclinations of nature." Ibid., p. 159.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 160-161.

⁶⁹ "[...] that we should apply ourselves to it incessantly, and without intermission. Many are deterred by the difficulties with which they meet: for that we may be capable of possessing God in the manner of which we speak, to have a share of His Illumination, and be filled with Him, there must be no void in the soul; she must be entirely filled with Him, and so closely attached to Him, that nothing can separate her from Him; and if through frailty she quits Him for a moment, she must return to Him quickly, and beware lest through slothfulness she remain long parted from Him. This is a point of so much consequence, that we may call it the beginning of all spirituality. Without this we can never reach perfection, and with it we shall infallibly attain to it." Ibid., pp. 161-162.

3.1.3 Differentiating the Movements

We have already seen that Surin recommended great trust in God and a total surrender of oneself as means of growing in perfection, and he believed that such docility involved ‘presume not upon thyself but in God.’ It is in the three manners of presuming on oneself i.e. seeking only one’s own interests, relying on one’s own good work and those trusting only in God⁷⁰ that Surin presents the examen as a means to distinguish between the subtle movements of self-seeking. He argues,

it is indeed dangerous to set our own virtues before us, as is often done without much reflection, instead of quickly turning away our eyes from them. If we closely examined those whose secret pride triumphs in their own good works, and displayed to them their hidden imperfections, they would be much astonished: for on meeting with the smallest mortification, or feeling themselves despised, they show extreme vexation, because they are accustomed to believe themselves exempt from failings.⁷¹

Here Surin points out that through a diligent examen we become aware of the different methods of proceeding so as to avoid self-seeking,⁷² and through the help of this practice one can reach greater degree of perfection.

Further highlighting the importance of distinguishing true inspiration from false ones, so as to clearly perceive the will of God, Surin outlines three principles, namely the

⁷⁰ The first are the ones who seek only of their own interests, who love themselves alone and think only of their own activity. The source of presuming for such people are their own talents, and once they are removed of these temporary possessions such people are totally at loss. The second category of people are the ones who gloat about their good works. Surin terms such attitude as subtle self-seeking: “a more subtle kind of self-trust for desiring comfort; they say to themselves, “I have long employed myself in good works; I hate the amusements and vanities of the world; I do penance, and communicate often.” Thus they try to recover themselves from the dejection into which they fall at times. Truly, a good conscience is a joy to those who have no cause for self-reproach; but a pure and really virtuous soul makes no such reflections.” See *ibid.*, pp. 67ff.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

⁷² According to Surin, the subtle self-trust comes from attributing the good works that they have done to themselves and not to God, their resource is the recollection of the good they have done, they find comfort in themselves, etc. “We must then beware of these two different methods of proceeding; the one gross, and seen in the imperfect, who are filled with esteem for their own good qualities, and make them their comfort and their rejoicing; the other more subtle, and observed in people who are not without virtue, but who having, as yet, too little, reckon much on their good works. In the most holy communities people are to be found, who, thinking that they have acquired much virtue, say in their hearts, I am not like many who do nothing, for I alone fill many offices; the superiors are well pleased with me, and I am at peace with all. They form and cherish in their imagination vain ideas of their merit, and instead of obliterating them to remember God only, they recall them constantly, principally in seasons of dejection, when they desire comfort. This is a sure sign of being still very far from perfection.” Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

law of God, the disposition of Providence and obedience.⁷³ In order to accomplish the Divine will it is necessary to do anything purely because God commands and to do nothing that does not conform entirely to the Divine will. In such circumstances, it is important to examine what inspirations come from God and what does not proceed from Him.

But it is certain that one whose intention is perfectly pure is not exposed to grievous doubts, because acting sincerely, and desiring to do whatever is best, he can hardly be deceived; and in any case he will be excusable, if before acting he examined the inspiration, and, for greater security, consulted with persons experienced in the spiritual life. Moreover, those who have long been led by the Spirit of God, are in the habit of following the drawings of Grace and the direction of the Holy Spirit, and consequently cannot then fail of doing His Divine will.⁷⁴

In Surin's opinion it is the weak and the unmortified who will be deceived, and they would make easy mistakes of taking one's own will as coming from God. The ones who do not act out of self-love, but are cautious to examine the motives, incline to that which mortifies more and at the same time depend on prayer to do the Divine will.⁷⁵ Thus, Surin lays importance on the motive behind actions and subsequently there is greater need to clearly examine those motives.⁷⁶

Terming humility as the foundation of whole spiritual life, Surin proposes the examen as one of the means to arrive at a greater degree of this virtue. There are three things required – to consider where lies true humility, to stop the angry movements and to examen. In his own words,

⁷³ “By the law of God we mean all that is contained in the Decalogue, and all ordinances emanating from a legitimate power, whether written, or authorized and confirmed by custom [...]. The dealings of Providence, such as events which depend in no manner on the will of man, are evident tokens of that of God. Amongst these we must class sicknesses, misfortunes, bad weather, unforeseen accidents, loss of property, persecutions, all things, in a word, which God does not leave to our own disposal: for if we examine these things well, though the malice of men may have a part in them, it is manifest that they are inflictions of God's Providence, and effects of His will. There remains only the obedience due to those whom we are lawfully bound to obey. Now we cannot doubt that in executing their orders, we execute those of God.” *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 204-205.

⁷⁶ “[...] for of things not commanded, men in general regard only what is great and striking. But those who set before themselves only the will of God, consider the substance of the action but little in comparison of the motive. It is for the motive that they care; that is the only thing they value; and they are so indifferent to all besides, that gold and straw are alike to them. They think only of obeying the precepts of God, and in that alone they find their satisfaction and their rest.” *Ibid.*, pp. 205-206.

whenever we think ourselves offended, to be careful instantly to arrest the angry movement which rises in the heart; and, in order to repress it, to arm ourselves with a lively faith, and to recall to our mind all the holy thoughts we have had in prayer. The third is, every time that we examine our conscience, to reflect particularly on this, as on a point of great importance, and if we find that we have failed therein, have spoken any harsh or disobliging word, to conceive sincere grief, to be ashamed before God, to chastise the body severely; and, in order to humble the spirit through the flesh, to study ever to speak with great reserve on those occasions on which we ought to show humility, modesty, and gentleness.⁷⁷

Surin here clearly emphasises that the greatest difficulty is to die to one's self-love and when one does it this act becomes the most heroic and sublime of all – it is the height of perfection. One who has no more will or judgement of his/her own is guided by faith, and such perfection requires absolute detachment from self. Surin explains such a detachment in the following way:

to do it shortly, I say that your eyes must never rest on beautiful objects, except in order to know and admire their Author; that your ears must hear only such things as are useful to you, and suitable to your state; that your palate must never taste good food to find pleasure in it, but solely to support and strengthen nature; and so with other things; that your imagination must be full of the Mysteries of the Faith, of the Labours and Sufferings of the Saviour, of the good things of eternity; that your memory must have these same objects always present, and forget all worldly things which are neither suitable to your profession, nor necessary for your salvation; that your understanding must not trust in its own knowledge, and that the most learned must humble themselves to believe that all their learning is but ignorance, and all their wisdom but folly; that, lastly, your will must break all its attachments, and change so much in inclination and taste, that sweet things may become bitter to it, and bitter sweet.⁷⁸

In this way one breaks away from attachments and inclination so as to move towards perfection.

At the same time, Surin points out that the examination of conscience that one practices not only helps discover the movements of the heart but also assists in self-knowledge:

examine, then, the movements of your heart; see if you are resolved to die rather than to sin against God; if you have a real desire of pleasing Him, and Him only. If you have nothing to reproach yourself with in this respect, doubt not that your actions and thoughts are pleasing in His sight; for this is the surest mark of a right and Christian conduct. But

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 212.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 248.

to augment considerably the merit of your good works, do them on the principle of the love of God, with a single eye to His Glory, and in the spirit of our Lord. An action is truly holy and perfect when these three things meet in it.⁷⁹

Thus, Surin emphasises that such examen also helps one to test if one is indeed in a state of grace, where one is in the presence of God. In proposing the examen to verify in what state one is Surin points to the great evaluative aspect of the examen: “can you feel any self-complacency, or any attachment to your own will? [...] But do you wish thoroughly to know your inward state? Do you desire to know if your conduct is pleasing to the Divine Majesty, if your feelings and desires proceed from Grace, if you are acting in the Spirit of our Lord? Examine if you preserve peace of heart in the tumult of the world; if you avoid applause and praise; if you despise the honours and good things of the earth; [...]”⁸⁰ In this way, Surin considers that a thorough examen would reveal the perfection in spiritual life.⁸¹

3.2 The Particular Examen

According to Surin the particular examen is another way of asking an account from one’s soul based on one’s resolutions. While insisting that there should be a specific defect on which this examen is done, he proposes the following as possible subject matter for a meticulous examen:

l’âme désireus de sa perfection prend quelque vice ou empêchement particulier à combattre, que’elle a en tête plusieurs jours ou mois sans quitter l’entreprise jusqu’à ce que’elle en ait entièrement diminué les forces, comme, par exemple, l’habitude à mentir ou dissimuler, l’habitude encore à parler mal de son prochain, à parler avantageusement de soi, à dèguiser avec ruse et procéder finement contre la simplicité, à parler avec railleries et bouffonnerie, à suivre aux repas ses appétits, à parler rudiment à son prochain contre le bénignité, à se repaître de curiosités et nouvelles, à se laisser aller au caquet par pur relâche. Tells et semblables choses peuvent servir de matière à cet examen, entreprenant ces vices l’un après l’autre jusqu’à qu’on en ait affaibli l’habitude, les ayant en sa pensée ordinairement comme des ennemis.⁸²

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 250.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 251.

⁸¹ “Examine all these things thoroughly; and if you have them all, or at least have some of them, I dare not say with certainty that you are in a good state, for, according to Scripture, we can never be certain on this point [...]. As long as you are in this disposition, doubt not that The Cross of Christ shall be your portion, and His Love your treasure.” Ibid., p. 252.

⁸² Surin, *Guide Spiritual pour*, p. 174.

Surin recommends some acts of humiliation or punishment at every fault, like kissing the floor in order to discipline oneself. He considers strong disciplines as an absolute necessity to amend one's particular vice. According to Surin the efficacy of the examen lies in three things: knowing the sins committed, evaluating one's progress in the proposed perfection and how faithful one is in the fight against particular vice.⁸³

3.3 Observations

For Surin the purity of the heart is an important aspect of perfection in life, and he considers union and familiarity with God as the highest degree of perfection. As we have noted, living an interior life presupposes a total detachment from affections as he believed that any disordered affections would hinder the progress. The examen that one does is to find out the attachments that block the progress as well as to balance the affections in order to have a continual communion with God. The examen is a means to be watchful or to avoid the pitfalls of self-love. The idea of diligence in examining even the smallest actions does not indicate any moralistic principles. Rather, Surin proposes the examen to distinguish false inspirations from true ones, to check the docility of the person, to notice the subtle movements of self-seeking, etc. and all these indicate to a spiritual examen where the concern is to find out the presence of God. In such examen Surin talks about finding out the inclinations, the movements of the heart, and so on. Therefore, especially since there are hardly any moralistic elements we can conclude that the type of examen that Surin proposes tends clearly towards spiritual discernment.

4 Jean Pierre de Caussade

Jean Pierre de Caussade⁸⁴ was born in Cahors, France in 1675, and entered the Society as an eighteen-year-old in 1693.⁸⁵ After his novitiate, he taught grammar,

⁸³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 175.

⁸⁴ His full name was Jean Pierre Thomas Caussade. The particle "de" was attached to his name by the regent of the Duchy of Lorraine, in 1734. Robert M. McKeon mentions this in the introduction to the book of Caussade, *A Treatise on Prayer from the Heart*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1998, pp. 28-29.

⁸⁵ Cf. Michel Olphe-Galliard, "Caussade, Jean-Pierre de," in *DHCJ* vol. I, p. 723.

metaphysics, humanities, rhetoric, etc. before he was ordained in 1704. Other than teaching ministry he spent most of his time in spiritual ministry, be it to women religious in Nancy or to seminarians at Albi.⁸⁶ Caussade is known for his work *Abandonment to Divine Providence*, which was discovered and published by Henri Ramière in 1861. Though *Sacrament of the Present Moment* is an expression that is popular from this work, his lasting contribution comes from the instructions and letters that offer direction to anyone seeking depth in silence, contemplation and mystical prayer. His works contribute much to the understanding of mystical prayer, especially that of the 17th century French tradition.⁸⁷

In our effort to study the daily examen, we analyse how Caussade presents the Ignatian examen in his works, and this is of significance since his teaching was in dialogue with other figures like Madame Guyon, Francis de Sales, Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, etc. What makes it even more interesting is that through the letters and other works Caussade addresses the spiritual difficulties of his time, aimed at helping a person walk towards sanctity.⁸⁸ And here we study his letters and instructions as well as his treatise on *Prayer from the Heart* to find out how he understood the examen.

⁸⁶ It was between 1730-1732, when at Lorraine that Caussade came in contact with the Visitation sisters in Nancy. It was around the period of 1732-1739 that he developed most of his teachings on prayer and abandonment to divine Providence. The seven years as the director of the retreat house there gave him opportunities to give conferences and much of his writings are collected with the help of the notes taken by these nuns. See Olphe-Galliard, "Caussade," p. 723; Caussade, *Prayer from the Heart*, pp. 30-31; Jean-Pierre Lafouge (ed.), *For God's Greater Glory: Gems of Jesuit Spirituality from Louis Lallemant, Jean-Pierre de Caussade and Clade de la Colombière*, Indiana: World Wisdom, 2006, p. xxiii.

⁸⁷ *Instructions spirituelles en forme de dialogue sur les divers états d'oraison suivant la doctrine de M. Bossuet* (Perpignan, 1741. *Bossuet maître d'oraison*, ed. H. Bremond, Paris, 1931); *L'abandon à la Providence divine* (Paris, 1861, 1966); *Traité sur l'oraison du coeur* (Paris, 1981) and *Lettres spirituelles*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1962-1964). Cf. Olphe-Galliard, "Caussade," p. 723.

⁸⁸ In the introduction to the work *Abandonment to Divine Providence*, Arnold comments, "that which renders Dr. de Caussade's letters especially valuable, and makes them useful in an eminently practical manner, is the circumstance that they are, for the most part, addressed to persons suffering under different kinds of darkness, desolation and trials; in a word, to those whom God designs for a high degree of sanctity. To all the doubts submitted to him, and to all the sufferings exposed to him by his correspondents, the holy Director applied but one and the same solution and remedy—abandonment, but, with perfect tact he adapts this practice to the particular nature of the trial, and proportions its exercise to the degree of perfection to which each soul has attained. The same method of direction he applies in a hundred different ways, and therefore this correspondence can be justly compared to a ladder by which the soul ascends by successive degrees from a still very imperfect state, to one of the most intimate union with God, and to the most heroic abandonment. To whatever degree a soul has attained we can safely promise that it will find in these letters suitable advice and a solution of the difficulties by which it is beset. Even those who look upon the spiritual life as an inextricable labyrinth will receive from the hands of Fr. de Caussade the clue which will enable them to escape from the darkness that envelopes them, and to enjoy peace in the midst

4.1 Abandonment and the Examen

According to Caussade the secret of all spiritual growth lies in self-giving and self-forgetting; that is, one must give oneself to God and afterwards forget oneself completely, what he terms as abandonment to God's providence. The core of spiritual achievements, he would say, lies not in one's own effort, not in busying oneself in meditations and long prayers, but in grace of God. In other words, receive what comes to us moment by moment – not by conscious acts of resignation and deliberate indifference – but by abandoning ourselves to that; accepting everything because it comes as God's will for us here and now, in this particular instant. In such sacrament of present moment Caussade considers the examen in a different light. We look at how the examen has a part to play in attentive and passive stance to the will of God.

4.1.1 The Examen and Confession

Complete and absolute abandonment to Divine Providence was the main idea of Caussade and he believed that this was possible for all, no matter how simple one was; all that was required was an upright intention and a good will. At one level Caussade saw the examen as a help in preparing for the sacrament of confessions. For, in his letters he says that for the attainment of perfect conformity to the will of God it was important to declare one's desire to belong to God and then to make an act of submission. What is important is to

think no more about the past but only of the present and future. Do not trouble about your confessions, but accuse yourself simply of those faults you can remember after seven or eight minutes examen. It is a good thing to add to the accusation a more serious sin of your past life. This will cause you to make a more fervent act of contrition and dispose you to receive more abundantly the grace of the Sacrament. You should not make too many efforts to get rid of the obstacles which make frequent confession disagreeable to you.⁸⁹

of their uneasiness.” Jean Pierre de Caussade, *Abandonment to Divine Providence* (ed. by J. Ramiere, translated from French by E. J. Strickland), Exeter: The Catholic Records Press, 1921, p. ii.

⁸⁹ Caussade, *Abandonment to Divine*, pp. 94-95.

Though confession is important Caussade reminds that one should not live in regret of the past or fear of the future. But they should leave the past to the infinite mercy of God, the future to His good Providence, give the present wholly to His love by being faithful to His grace.

Caussade has some counsels for people as how to approach confession: with great confidence in the infinite goodness of God, recalling that His mercy is greater than anything else and to go to Him with perfect confidence, in spite of all the weakness, misery and unfaithfulness. For he says,

do not spend more than half-an-hour over your preparation. More than that would be waste of time, and would give the devil an opportunity to create trouble in your soul. This must be avoided more than anything, for peace of mind is a tree of life, the true root of the interior spirit, and the best preparation for the prayer of recollection and interior silence. The first quarter of an hour at the most can be occupied with the remembrance of your faults, all those that you forget after this examen will be as if non-existent, and you will be forgiven. The last quarter of an hour should be employed in exciting yourself to contrition, begging this grace from God, and endeavouring to obtain it quietly and without any effort of the mind, by the thought of the goodness of God and the great mercy He has shown you in withdrawing you from the world.⁹⁰

Thus, according to Caussade a short examen is to precede the confession as a help to purify oneself of the faults, where the important thing is to have contrition. In order to induce contrition Caussade has the following recommendation:

after reflecting for some moments in this way you should think that contrition being purely spiritual is, by nature, not sensibly felt, and that sensible sorrow is so misleading that certain sinners in spite of every sign, are refused absolution, because it is possible that a habit of sin – even of mortal sin to which the will consents, may subsist with it. The surest sign of true sorrow for which the greatest sinner will receive absolution is, to resolve by the grace of God never to commit these great sins again [...]. As regards the declaration of your sins; tell those that you recollect simply and in as few words as possible, leaving the rest to the unbounded mercy of God without troubling about what you do not remember, or do not know. You can conclude by mentioning some greater sin of your past life. After that you may feel morally certain that you have received the grace of the Sacrament. The following is an easy way of practising frequent confession. To prevent more certainly all anxiety about the past and as a help for the future here is a counsel in a few words. Leave the past to the infinite mercy of God—the future to His sweet providence, and the present give up entirely to the love of God by our fidelity with the assistance of His grace, which will never fail you, except by your own fault.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 97.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 98.

Interestingly Caussade has the following proposal if people are confronted with the thoughts that they are still so imperfect, full of faults and defects, infidelities and weakness, and even consider themselves as blind and cannot see one's own fault:

I begin to think that I am so blind that I cannot see my faults, even when I have to weep for them before God and to confess them. I reply without hesitation, 'But I wish to know my sins, I no longer live in a state of voluntary dissipation, I quietly employ a little time in self-examination.' This is all that God requires, 'He will give me more light and knowledge when He considers it necessary; that is his business. I have placed the affair of my spiritual progress entirely in His hands, it is therefore sufficient for the present to accuse myself of the daily faults that God reveals to me, and some sin of my past life.'⁹²

Here we can see that Caussade proposes self-abandonment when one is faced with doubts and to trust God completely.

Caussade picks out vanity as an obstacle on the way to complete abandonment and therefore there is greater need to examine thoroughly the weak points.

You must know that before curing you of vanity God wills to make you feel all the ugliness of this accursed passion, and to convince you thoroughly of your powerlessness to cure it, so that all the glory of your cure should revert to Him alone. You have, then, in this matter, only two things to do. Firstly to examine peacefully this frightful interior ugliness. Secondly, to hope for and await in peace from God alone the moment fixed for your cure. You will never be at rest till you have learnt to distinguish what is from God from that which is your own; to separate what belongs to Him from what belongs to yourself. You add, "How can you teach me this secret." You do not understand what you are saying. I can easily teach it to you in a moment, but you cannot learn to practise it until you have been made to feel, in peace, all your miseries. I say, in peace, to give room for the operations of grace.⁹³

In the letter written to a postulant who struggled to practice abandonment amidst all the difficulties of living her vocation, along with other practices, Caussade recommended the daily examen:

now, this fidelity requires three things of you; first you must endeavour to preserve in your heart in spite of every obstacle both exterior and interior, this attraction towards God with the sincere desire to follow it when He Who has given it to you will Himself provide the means by which you will be able to concentrate yourself to His service in reality, as you have already done beforehand in your mind and heart. Your second duty is to hope against hope as Abraham did; that is, to believe firmly that, as God is all-powerful and

⁹² Ibid., p. 124.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 180.

that nothing in the world can resist Him, [...]. Your third duty is a great fidelity to all your exercises of piety; prayers, readings, meditations, masses, confessions, Communions, examens, and interior recollection; frequent raising of the heart to God without ever giving up in the slightest degree any of these practices, either through grief, trouble, disgust, weariness, dryness, or for any other reason whatever.⁹⁴

Here he points out that the trials were necessary to detach herself from everything as well as to keep her united to God, because He alone gives light, support, consolation and strength. Caussade recommended the practice of piety to such as these who are at the beginning of their religious life and he believed that these would lead them to better abandonment of oneself.

4.1.2 Resisting Temptations of Self-Love

According to Caussade, when one grows in abandonment, prayer becomes simpler, and such simplicity tends to union with God. Remaining in a kind of inactivity, like an empty space, or a mere instrument waiting for the master-hand of the worker, is an operation of grace,⁹⁵ and this is achieved by waiting patiently and in silence. Therefore, according to Caussade, the self-examinations often has the contrary effect. For, he believed, “all that is caused by, or proceeds from the love of God, [...] is sweet and gentle, like this very holy love itself; and the signs of a self-seeking nature are the confusion, haste, and anxiety of a self-love that is perpetually eager, anxious, and impetuous.” Caussade saw the activity of the examen as another occasion for self-seeking and therefore a distraction; for him prayer must be a constant turning of one’s heart to God or gazing interiorly upon His divine presence, because “the most perfect, is that which is the most simple, and the most simple, is that which contains the least of our own, the fewest ideas, imaginations and reasonings; in which one single feeling continues longer than the rest.”⁹⁶

In the beginnings of the process of abandonment Caussade proposes the examen mainly as a preparation for confession, but interestingly at later stages he warns against the use of such probing evaluations. He writes:

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 161.

⁹⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 151.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 134 (letter II/8).

I understand that your attraction has always been the knowledge and love of God in, and through Jesus Christ. The simple perception, or consideration of these mysteries, accompanied by holy affections, is already a very good method of prayer. When all the contemplation of the mind, and the affections of the heart are gathered into one point, for instance – the Deity, the prayer is much simplified, is better and more divine; but you must not imagine that this method will always continue: usually it is not a permanent state, but a fugitive grace. When it has passed, you must return to the simple contemplation of the mystery with some affections of the heart, gentle, peaceful, without effort or too much examination. Be careful, during the time of prayer, not to reflect on yourself, or your method of prayer, because to examine closely in this way, one often leaves off looking at God to look at oneself, to reflect and, as it were, to turn back on oneself simply out of self-love which, not having been entirely given up, falls back naturally on itself. When divine repose begins, do not think of its sweetness but only of God in whose heart your soul should rather seek charity and the infusion of those virtues which fill the soul during that happy sleep, than its own repose. For the rest you could not hear Mass nor recite the Office in a more worthy manner than with these interior dispositions, but you must prepare to be weaned from the milk of spiritual infancy, and to eat the bread of the strong.⁹⁷

His letters suggest that examination and evaluations are part of infancy of spiritual life, whereas abandonment was the sign of maturity. Caussade considers simplification of prayer as growth as well as a sign of greater endowment, and for him this leads to a loving interior look at God where one is not examining nor evaluating what one is doing. At this stage, then, the importance lies not in reflecting on oneself, rather on God.⁹⁸

Elsewhere, warning against excess prayer and too much of probing, Caussade says that the very desire to excel in virtue and to succeed in prayer are deadly traps, whereas what is required is simple prayer.

Let us desire only God, and God will satisfy all our desires. Let us blindly abandon ourselves to His holy will in all things, and by doing so we shall be delivered from all our cares. We shall then find, that, to advance in the ways of salvation and perfection there is, after all, very little to do, and that it suffices without so much examination about the past,

⁹⁷ Caussade, *Abandonment to Divine*, pp. 152-153.

⁹⁸ Among the many suggestions that Caussade makes, he emphasizes the importance and primacy of the grace of God and not human effort. Caussade writes, “your great attraction towards simplicity is a grace that can have no other effect than to unite you more closely with God, for simplicity tends to unity, and this can be obtained, first, by a simple and loving interior looking to God in pure faith, whether this interior looking is perceptible by its sweetness, as at present, or becomes almost unknown to the senses by being in the depths of the soul, or in the apex, or point of the spirit. Secondly, by keeping guard over all your interior senses in a profound silence. Thirdly, by only making repeated acts and reflections according as God gives you the thought, attraction, and impulsion.” *Ibid.*, p. 150.

and reflexion as to the future, to place our confidence in God at the present moment, and to regard Him as our good Father who is leading us by the hand.⁹⁹

Caussade considers giving up of one's own judgement as a way to get away from self-love: some of the greatest evils in a person who is progressing in prayer life is anxiety, uneasiness and interior agitation. Caussade proposes some remedies when he says,

the first condition for its cure is obedience, a childlike blind obedience founded on the principle that God, having authorised His priests to guide us cannot allow those souls to be deceived who, on this account, abandon themselves blindly to their guidance. Before all things, therefore, make your virtue consist in the renunciation of your own judgment, and in a humble and generous intention of believing and doing all that your director judges, before God, to be expedient. If you are animated with this spirit of obedience you will never allow yourself voluntarily to entertain thoughts opposed to what has been enjoined you, and you will take good care not to give in to the inclination to examine and scrutinize everything.¹⁰⁰

Caussade not only considers the scrutiny and examination as obstacles to abandonment but even as roots of other imperfections – hidden self-love and pride form the base of subtle, imperceptible and dangerous imperfections. He writes, “from this poisonous root grows an infinite number of imperfections of which you are scarcely conscious; useless self-examinations, still more useless self-complacency, idle fears, fruitless desires, frivolous little hopes, suspicions unfavourable to your neighbour, little jokes at her expense, and airs full of self-love.”¹⁰¹

Elsewhere in his correspondence, Caussade seems to further argue that too much of examining and evaluating are signs of fear, i.e. too much of a study of the problem as a sign of interior fears: “[...] you continue to cling to your fears and doubts; you study them too much, instead of despising them and abandoning yourself entirely to God as I have preached to you for a long time past. Without this happy and holy abandonment, you will never enjoy a solid peace full of absolute confidence in God alone, through Jesus Christ.” And he terms them as signs of dependence on oneself, rather than on God: “you are endeavouring to find help in yourself and your works, and to satisfy your conscience, as if your works gave your conscience greater security and stronger support than the mercy of

⁹⁹ Letter 29, *ibid.*, p. 169.

¹⁰⁰ Letter III/3, *ibid.*, p. 186.

¹⁰¹ Caussade, *Abandonment to Divine*, p. 264.

God, and the merits of Jesus Christ; and as though they could not deceive you.”¹⁰² The many spiritual activities like prayer, Mass, and the Office serve in the progress of abandonment; whereas too much examining has the contrary effect:

far from losing anything, you will have gained doubly, because combined with the merit gained by your spiritual exercises will be that of having made them in a most penitential and crucifying manner, and also with much humiliation; in this way, very far from having spoilt these holy exercises by foolish self-examination, and a thousand satisfactions of self-love, to which you would have been exposed in making them with feelings of devotion, you will have fulfilled these duties well by the practice of holy humility which is the foundation and guardian of every virtue.¹⁰³

In this way Caussade discourages an examen that is too much of self-engrossment and exhorts people to come out of themselves and abandon totally to God.¹⁰⁴

It is clear that for Caussade the focus of the examen is God’s activity and not one’s own: “moreover, that in all our prayers, readings, examens, and thoughts of God we should act quietly, gently, without confusion or effort, seeking only the union of our hearts with God, and for that making use of frequent pauses to give the Holy Spirit of God time to work in us what He pleases, and as He pleases.”¹⁰⁵ Further highlighting the possibility of subtle fears popping up from excess probing, Caussade points to the need for abandonment and not excess examining:

when the temptation is not strong it is easy to recognise for oneself and to feel that, far from giving consent to it, one rejects it; but when God permits the temptation to become strong and violent then, on account of the great involuntary agitation taking place in the inferior part, the superior has great difficulty in discerning its own movements, and remains in great perplexity and fear of having consented. Nothing more is wanting to occasion in these good souls the most terrible trouble and remorse which is a further trial permitted by God to prove their fidelity [...]. The greater the temptation and the pain and fear that result, the more certain is the verdict in favour of the person tempted. I join therefore in the opinion of your confessor, and this is the rule I lay down. 1st Neither examine, nor accuse yourself as a rule about these things. 2nd Bear peacefully your

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 189.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 250.

¹⁰⁴ “But as for you, you wish to remain always wrapped up in yourself, in your, so-called, spiritual interests; and God, to draw you out of this last resource of selflove, allows you to find nothing in yourself but a source of fears, doubts, uncertainty, trouble, anxiety and depression, as though this God of all goodness said by this, “Forget yourself, and you will find in Me only, peace, spiritual joy, calmness, and an absolute assurance of salvation. I am the God of your salvation, and you can be nothing but the cause of your own destruction.” Ibid., p. 191.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 253.

humiliation and interior martyrdom which, I assure you, is a great grace from God, but a grace which you will not be able to understand properly till after the trial is over.¹⁰⁶

Further emphasising the need to refrain from falling prey to such fears, Caussade says that it depends on each one to free themselves from fears and in great faith they have to make the examen for quarter of an hour and then confess well.¹⁰⁷ In his counsel on how to handle trials, Caussade also says that the vain scruples that come out of excess examination are devices of the devil and hence one should be careful not to provoke them by examining vehemently.¹⁰⁸

However, Caussade is quick to add that while one abandons oneself totally to God, the examen is not totally ruled, for there is the necessity of knowing one's sins. He argues that a clear view of one's sins not only make them humble but also give confidence to abandon themselves to God totally.¹⁰⁹ Caussade argues that normally one tends to think that when one has totally forgotten the self there is no chance of knowing and correcting

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

¹⁰⁷ "It only requires a grain of faith and of docility in following the perfectly safe rules that I will outline for you. [...] After a quarter of an hour at the very utmost for the examen, and without taking too much trouble but doing it as you best can, you will say to yourself, "By the mercy of God I live in a state of habitual contrition since I would not commit a mortal sin for anything this world could give me. I even feel a horror of venial sin, although, unhappily, I have not yet left off committing it; therefore I only have to make an act of contrition as best I can, and as He has put it into my heart by His grace." That will not take long, a few minutes will suffice, and the best way to make acts of contrition is to pray that God will Himself produce them in you." *Ibid.*, p. 314. Caussade proposes this method of preparing for the confession and we see that here he talks of the examen as a preparation for confession. But what is to be noted is that he asks not to fall into an examen that promotes self-love.

¹⁰⁸ "I think that your friend does quite right not to examine her thoughts; an examination of that kind would only confuse her mind still more. She must leave all to God and despise these thoughts and the pretended cries of her conscience, and go forward without taking any notice of them, directly there is nothing absolutely bad in the act she wishes to perform. These vain scruples are a device of the devil to deprive her of peace, and thus to prevent her making progress in virtue; for trouble is to the soul a most dangerous malady which makes it too languid for the practice of virtue, as a sick person who is weak and languid is incapable of bodily exertion." *Ibid.*, p. 334.

¹⁰⁹ "The keen perception of faults and imperfections is the grace suitable to this state, and it is a very precious grace. Why? First because this clear view of our miseries keeps us humble, and even sometimes inspires us with a wholesome horror and a holy fear of ourselves. Secondly, because this state, apparently so miserable and so desperate gives occasion to an heroic abandonment into the hands of God. Those who have gauged the depths of their own nothingness can no longer retain any kind of confidence in themselves, nor trust in any way to their works in which they can discover nothing but misery, self-love, and corruption. This absolute distrust and complete disregard of self is the source from which alone flow those delightful consolations of souls wholly abandoned to God, and form their inalterable peace, holy joy and immoveable confidence in God only." *Ibid.*, p. 189.

one's imperfections, but the contrary is the face: a total abandonment brings light of God to see the imperfections more than ever.¹¹⁰ This is what he calls an inner light:

never can you more clearly detect your faults than in the clear light of the presence of God. This is like an interior sunshine, which, without necessitating a constant self-examination makes us see and understand everything by a simple impression. In this way also, better than in any other, all our defects and imperfections are gradually consumed like straw in a fire [...]. In abandoning all to God, therefore, we regain all in Him alone and with profit to our souls. In this way we are delivered once for all from these foolish self-examinations, fears, troubles, and uneasiness; in one word from these tortures to which those self-engrossed souls condemn themselves who wish to love God only out of self-love, who seek salvation and perfection, not so much to please God and to glorify Him, as for their own interests and eternal happiness.¹¹¹

Thus, we can see that Caussade is not against examining and correcting the faults, but rather he is of the opinion that by abandonment one gets to see everything in a new light.

Consequently, according to Caussade, a total abandonment is what leads the soul to peace and he says,

You only require patience, resignation, and abandonment, but these dispositions should not be felt. Remember that God sees in the depths of your heart all your most secret desires [...]. Leave off these reflexions and continual self-examinations about what you do, or leave undone; you have abandoned yourself entirely to God, and given yourself to Him over and over again; you must not take back your offering. Leave the care of everything to Him.¹¹²

For Caussade, then, abandonment is not a means to be united with God but it is the end itself and this is a state of perfection.

4.1.3 Purity of Conscience and Abandonment

In his treaty on abandonment, just as in the letters, Caussade talked about the need for a total abandonment to the Divine Providence and not to be over anxious to evaluate and reason out the activities. Caussade taught that the intimacy with God is a grace that He bestows and any examining would be a subtle form of self-love and a temptation to retain

¹¹⁰ "But again you say, "In this forgetfulness of self, far from correcting myself of my sins and imperfections, I do not even know them." An error! an illusion! Ignorance!" *ibid.*, p. 282.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 359.

the focus on oneself. On the other hand, we have also seen that in the realm of total abandonment where the soul is immersed and engulfed with joy, Caussade gives no place for self-evaluation. What he talks, instead, is of an inner asceticism where purity of conscience, of heart, of mind and of action are important elements, and this helps people to develop a prayer from the heart. Caussade opines that with the help of the Holy Spirit, such a disposition of the heart is achieved; however, it requires a holy recollection or a virtuous disposition of the heart. According to him, such prayer is possible with the help of attentive pauses, through the help of disposing oneself through what he terms as the four-fold purity. In his treaty on Prayer Caussade talks of four levels of purification. “To facilitate memory and understanding, I summarize them in four expressions: purity of conscience, of heart, of mind, and of action.” Explaining attentive pause as the most perfect prayer Caussade wrote to Sister Marie-Anne-Thérèse de Rosen in 1731:

always listen to that great interior Director, who alone can give light and strength to us in our necessities. Do not use books when He speaks interiorly. Let your main point be a holy repose in the divine presence; never leave it, do not break the sacred silence unless God gives you an attraction for some holy and useful colloquy, after which re-enter your fort and sanctuary which is no other than recollection and interior silence in the presence and the sight of your Beloved [...]. I have always thought, with him, that no one ought to meddle with the prayer of recollection unless he be called to it, and also that this grace cannot be merited by good works, nor can anyone succeed in it by any effort of his own. I have only added, with Fr. Surin and other authors, that one can, indirectly and beforehand, dispose oneself to receive this great gift of heaven by removing obstacles, first by a great purity of conscience, secondly by purity of heart, thirdly of spirit, and fourthly of intention which will carry a soul very far on the road to it; and that having so far disposed oneself, one ought by short and frequent pauses, as if waiting to listen, give free course to the interior spirit.¹¹³

Here we see clearly that Caussade talks of purity of conscience as well as of heart and spirit; it is also important to note that he talks of interior director, of having an interior repose.

Caussade defines conscience as “a firm disposition of the heart never to want to consent to the least offence against God through deliberate purpose. This habitual disposition can subsist very well alongside many other contrary ones that, however, are forthwith given up.”¹¹⁴ He considers this disposition an absolute necessity in achieving

¹¹³ Ibid., pp. 134-135, Letter 9. See also Caussade, *Prayer from the Heart*, p. 123, note 64.

¹¹⁴ Caussade, *Prayer from the Heart*, p. 125.

attentive pauses in prayer and this is achieved gradually: “we can acquire it bit by bit this purity of conscience by following the recommendations of spiritual writings and directors, but especially by paying great attention to all our interior agitations, so that the continuous perception of our own weaknesses leads us to have recourse to God at every occasion of a fall and to repent and humiliate ourselves after the least failings.”¹¹⁵ The secret of such corrections lies in humbly accepting oneself and having what he terms ‘an interior humiliation without sorrow and agitations.’ In such acts of humbling oneself, Caussade warns again, there exists the danger of self-love:

this interior humiliation must likewise be exempt from bustle, sorrow, resentment against oneself; for not only do agitations unsettle the soul and solve nothing, they are likewise new faults often more dangerous than the initial ones. Why? Because they arise from vexed self-love and pride scandalized at seeing ourselves still so imperfect. Therefore, St. Francis de Sales continues, drop all sorrowful, anxious, and resentful humility that consequently is full of pride; learn to accept yourself just as you must accept your neighbour; with the same charity, practice kindness towards yourself just as you do towards others, by correcting yourself without anger, bitterness, and spite. This brings you back to God with the same confidence as if nothing happened to you. This is the great secret for quickly acquiring great purity of conscience.¹¹⁶

And Caussade opines that such an exercise brings knowledge of oneself as well as leads to an experience of humility in front of the Lord. By creating such a disposition of the heart and by experiencing forgiveness of sins one grows in dependence on God.

The second level of purity that Caussade proposes is that of the heart. Here the heart is to be free from every attachment, not only from evil ones but even from those that are called innocent, because in truth they can never be fully innocent, since the heart, which is only made for God, leaves room for creatures. Since the prayer is a sweet rest of mind and heart in God and a divided heart cannot enter into prayer, there arise the need to have pauses. A heart that is accustomed to allowing thoughts and affections about other objects cannot rest in God precisely because purity of heart is a taste for God, a gaze fixed at God, a recollection in God, as well as an interior silence of respect, admiration, and love.¹¹⁷ And,

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 126.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 134.

Caussade insists that unless the heart gets rid of the initial attachments¹¹⁸ such purity and perfection are not possible. This perfection is not limited to just a selected few, and the pause is possible for all. The detachment creates a pure heart and such a purity has different degrees, that is to say a great detachment of heart corresponds to great facility for entering into such prayer as well as doing it well, and secondly lesser detachment leads to lesser facility.¹¹⁹ Thus in Caussade's view, getting rid of attachments and attaining freedom are important, and the facility to enter into prayer and to do it well are proportional to the degree of purity of the heart.¹²⁰

Caussade has a vivid imagery when he talks of purity of mind: “[purity of mind] consists in conquering a certain aimlessness of the mind that naturally drifts about considering anything that pleases it, even when nothing wrong is involved; and at the very least it consists in having acquired enough sway over the mind in order to stop and temper its natural activity to run unceasingly after all the vain images of sensible objects, just as children run after butterflies.”¹²¹ Caussade considers the purity of mind as important since a mind continually running about in vain will not be able to enter into interior prayer¹²² and it will be without direction. From this it follows that

¹¹⁸ The need for purification is well captured in the questions that Caussade poses: “but how can a heart that dotes on sensible goods and the pleasures of the senses, such as honour, esteem, reputation, idleness, and commerce with the worldly, taste God unless it purifies itself of its terrestrial, carnal, human predilections?”; But how can this gaze of pure faith be sustained through the thick clouds of ideas and sensible images, when even one attachment fills the mind and imagination?”; But how can we gather our powers, thoughts, desires, and emotions into God if it only takes one foreign objects to hold them as if tied and chained or to call them back to itself by the same charms by which it knew how to capture our heart in the first place?” Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 135.

¹²⁰ The lowest degree is a sincere desire to acquire it, to work on it, and to use varied means. Though Caussade says that it is proportional to the degree of purity, he points out that even those who have minimum facility can enter into prayer. He is of the opinion that God rewards the goodwill by allowing him to be experienced occasionally. “Now the onset of purity and unattachment in a heart produces in its turn a new taste, a new attraction, and a new facility for recollection. Such rapidity in the progress of both occurs – that is to say, in the progress of purity of heart facilitating recollection and in that of recollection increasing unattachment [...]” *Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

¹²² “How can a mind that is always flitting and wandering about all those agreeable or entertaining objects turn its inner gaze to fix it either on God or on the incomprehensible objects of faith? Furthermore, even when it can do so for several instants, won't the many different ideas and flattering images, which comes continually and in swarms to display themselves in its imagination, be with regard to the mind like a cloud of dust lifted up by a whirlwind around a traveller, who will no longer know where he is going or where he is or even see himself?” *Ibid.*

it is necessary to resist continually the natural aimlessness of the mind and to curb continually its natural acidity by never permitting it to look willingly at itself and to stray with vain or useless thoughts and, even worse, to hold onto them, to feed on them, and to live on them. Therefore, it is necessary to look at all the merely useless or frivolous thoughts in the same way as good people look at truly evil ones in order to behave likewise as soon as we are aware of them.¹²³

Though such a purity is difficult to achieve, Caussade points out, with the grace of God one can withdraw gradually from attachments.

It is important to consider what Caussade points out that about the danger self-love: in the process of purification there exists the danger of self-love, may be the mind drifts away through the pondering of its own thoughts, cherishing its ideas or nourishing itself with its own reflections. Moreover, the mind fixes its attention on objects because the principal pleasure of the heart and vain delights come from them.¹²⁴ Here in the process of purifying the action there is no role for reflection or examen precisely because they would lead to self-love. Caussade says,

exactly for this reason we must be on watch all the more against the surprises of self-love, which so jealously gives free rein to its thoughts, which constitute the food and life of the mind, whose activity cannot be confined within the proper limits of the purely necessary [...]. Under the pretext that we must think about what we ought to do and say, how futilely and unnecessarily we ruminate and reflect, even though the time we waste in deliberations and introspection over the least things would often have been long enough to accomplish them? Under the pretext of scrutiny and introspection after some speeches, conversations, or the affairs that we have already dealt with, no matter what were the circumstances, time, or place, we will not fail to examine, exactly recall, words spoken or frivolously blurted out, and thus immediately open the gates to a crowd of very futile reflections. Usually these only serve to incite vain joys, melancholies, fears, or even vain hopes; but in turn all these only increases without end the dispersion of the mind and overthrow interior peace by carrying anxiety and trouble right into the depths of the soul.¹²⁵

In Caussade's opinion, under the pretext of spiritual progress, many reflect and plan worthless projects and it is precisely on such reflections that self-love ruminates. And such

¹²³ Ibid., pp. 140-141.

¹²⁴ "Since it is principally by the pleasure of the heart and vain delights that the mind fixes its interior attention on the objects from which these agreeable feelings come to it, as soon as we feel natural pleasure, we must no longer pause to taste these feelings, to savor them, [as we would do] if they were heinous pleasure [...] we must right away withdraw from it, wean our heart from it, and side-track it by giving the heart its true object, which is God, in order to accustom ourselves to take pleasure, to rejoice only in God." Ibid., p. 142.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 143.

anxiety, according to Caussade, can be dealt with by thinking of profiting from the present moment as God gives, leaving the past to his mercy, and the future to his providence.¹²⁶

We have already seen that Caussade is against evaluations and examining and he proposes a total self-abandonment. He calls the abandonment of all pondering and ruminating as the severest subjugation of the mind and the most crucifying abnegation and interior death, and hence his recommendation is the following:

the curiosity to examine at that time what is going on inside us must be put aside. We confusedly feel what is happening, just as when we are above a mine, we feel slight tremors as there are workers who are toiling in the bowels of the earth, but we must not want to penetrate further. God reserves the secret to himself. We can well put our trust in him, what results will tell us more. We [we should] avoid as much as we can every kind of rumination about ourselves and our recollection, because this would be turning these interior awarenesses away from God and consequently distracting ourselves.¹²⁷

Highlighting further the importance of resisting the pleasures of self-love Caussade says that we should not go to pray with self-seeking views, but only to carry out the will of God and to learn to conform always to it more and more, because perfection consists in such perspective.¹²⁸ Here again we see Caussade's firm belief that the secret of spiritual achievement lies not in one's own efforts but in God's grace – 'not in being perpetually busy in heaping up meditation upon meditation, prayer upon prayer, reading upon reading but in learning from simple souls the great secret of knowing how to hold oneself back a little in peace and silence, attentive before God.'¹²⁹ Such prayer of the heart and abandonment requires getting away from attachments.

Caussade talks of another degree of purity – that of actions, which consists not in the substance of our actions, but in the purity of the motives that propel us to act. This purity is seen in acting precisely only for the love of God and according to His perspectives.¹³⁰ This purity of action is acquired by three means: the first as a result of

¹²⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 145.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

¹²⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 162.

¹²⁹ See Barry Conaway, *The Hidden Way of Love: Jean-Pierre de Caussade's Spirituality of Abandonment*, Oxford: SLG, 1999, p. 6.

¹³⁰ Cf. Caussade, *Prayer from the Heart*, p. 147.

purity of conscience in heart and mind; second by continual vigilance in the beginning of one's actions; and thirdly by keeping a careful watch over the unfolding of actions.¹³¹ Caussade underlines the importance of continual vigilance when he says, "although at first we may have had the strength to renounce every flattering enticement of the senses or of self-love [...] if then we forget to keep careful watch over ourselves, [...] inevitably exerts greater and greater pull. Thus the heart weakens bit by bit and our natural inclinations, although mortified by early sacrifices, wake up and regain their ascendancy."¹³² Therefore, Caussade teaches that great mastery over oneself is required to prevent such captivity. This purity of action is achieved by acting not only according to the divine ordering of things on every occasion but even more so with the sole intention of pleasing God.¹³³ Caussade terms vanity – whether outward or inward – as the most feared impurity of action.¹³⁴ Thus, for Caussade, purification at various degrees is important in achieving the perfection – a perfection that consists in total abandonment to the Divine Providence, where the examen plays a vital role.

4.2 Observations

Caussade advocates exterior mortification as a means to achieve interior mortification; according to him real holiness and perfection consists in the latter. As we have seen, the multiple degrees of purification are needed to achieve perfect prayer and total abandonment. Caussade presents the examen in the initial stages of such purification, and it is mostly with the sacrament of confessions. He places the examen as an aid in better preparing for confession or when not in the context of such sacraments, it is mostly self-

¹³¹ "Purity of conscience in heart and mind leads to it. Why? Insofar as we make it a point to avoid all that might displease God, attach ourselves only to God, and occupy ourselves only with God. Don't we inevitably find ourselves fully disposed to act only for God or according to God's perspectives? Purity of action is acquired by continual vigilance in the beginning of our actions and especially as they unfold. I say in the beginning, because if these actions are so agreeable and in conformity with the inclinations of nature, right away they are carried forward by their own motion through the sole attraction of pleasure or interest." *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 148.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 149.

¹³⁴ Outward vanity directs its attention and biases to what will be said and thought by such or such a person whose esteem and approval are most cherished and most precious. This is made into an idol a certain reputation. Caussade calls the inward vanity as more ominous because it is evil as well as it is more covert. Inward vanity consists in puffed-up self-esteem and swollen self-confidence. See *ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

examination to get rid of the faults and weak points. Thus, it would not be wrong to conclude that here he talks of an examen that is concerned with sins, faults and their confession and hence a moralistic one.

However, most of what Caussade talks about the examen is in the ambit of abandonment and perfection in prayer of the heart. Caussade saw the examen and other moments of reflection as temptations of self-love and therefore to be avoided. We have seen that Caussade is insistent on the fact that curiosity to examine what goes on inside while one is meditating or while in a holy recollection, is the sign of self-love. For Caussade that which contains least of oneself, fewest imagination and reasoning is the simplest yet perfect prayer, and here the examen has no role. In no fewer words he talks of the danger of vanity in self-love and reflecting on oneself. When Caussade warns to avoid any kind of rumination about oneself it is clear that there is no role for the examen at such degree of purity and perfection. Fruitless self-examination is as sign of hidden self-love and the root of other imperfections.

Notwithstanding such a position, we have also seen that Caussade talks of an abandonment to the will of God where one is to be actively passive: an abandonment to the divine providence; and this also presupposes knowing one's sins and faults, but without sliding into self-seeking. Caussade advocates a higher degree of perfection in purity of action where what matters is the motif of the actions. He considers it a higher degree of perfection when there is continual vigilance at the beginning as well as at the unfolding of the actions. Thus, we see that Caussade is against any examen that become occasion for self-seeking but proposes great vigilance. So, in a way, *there is an examen without examining* – there is total abandonment to God without too much probing. Thus, Caussade is against any examen where the self takes the centre stage, but he clearly recommends an examen where God is the centre. From these we can conclude that great vigilance at the beginning and during the unfolding of actions is closely connected to the discerning principles that Ignatius outlines. The various levels of purity of conscience and that of action move more with an examen that bases itself on discernment. In such a scenario, it

would be right to say that Caussade, in his principles of total abandonment and prayer from the heart, leans more towards a spiritual discerning examen.

8 Jean Crasset

Jean Crasset was born in 1618 at Dieppe in France. He entered the Society of Jesus – having already completed two years of theology – in 1638 in Paris.¹³⁵ The two persons who played significant role in the spiritual life of this Jesuit were his novice master Julien Hayneufve and Simon de Lessau, his spiritual guide.¹³⁶ Crasset is known as a vivid preacher, who actively preached in most of the parishes of Paris, from 1658 till his death in 1692. In 1669 he founded and directed for 23 years a sodality of men, who were involved in charity. The inborn timidity and precarious health did not prevent Crasset from reaching out to people as spiritual guide, teacher of catechism and as retreat preacher. His major works include *La méthode d'oraison*, *Considérations sur les principales actions de la vie*, *La douce et sainte mort*, *La véritable dévotion envers la S. Vierge*, and *Considérations chrétiennes pour tous les jours de l'année*, 3 vols.¹³⁷

What marks out Crasset is that his teachings were addressed primarily to ordinary lay people, and some would term him as a ‘Berulian Jesuit,’¹³⁸ for his attempt to combine teachings of Francis de Sales and Ignatius. Crasset played an important role in popularizing mental prayer and meditations through his writings, especially *Méthode d'oraison avec une nouvelle forme de meditations*.¹³⁹

¹³⁵ Cf. Paul Dulcos, “Crasset, Jean,” in *DHCJ*, vol. II, pp. 992-993, here p. 992.

¹³⁶ Hayneufve was the master in the first year, at Rouen. De Lessau guided Crasset during the early years of study when he was constantly nagged by desolation. The way of ‘abandonment’ helped Crasset greatly to get rid of anxiety and find peace. See *ibid*.

¹³⁷ Cf. *ibid*.

¹³⁸ Henri Bremond terms Crasset as a ‘jesuita beruliano.’ See Dulcos, “Crasset, Jean,” p. 993; Michel Olphe-Galliard, “Crasset,” in *DSp*, vol. II/2, p. 2518. See also Ella McMahon (ed./trans.), *The Secret of Sanctity According to St. Francis de Sales and Father Crasset*, New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1892.

¹³⁹ See Olphe-Galliard, “Crasset,” p. 2517. de Guibert comments about the contribution of Crasset this way, “it is a work quite simple and quite practical, endeavouring to make prayer easy in spite of obstacles by suggesting familiar and affective ways of communing with God. The manner which he proposes is made up of completely of brief thoughts and affectionate aspirations.” Guibert, *The Jesuits*, p. 368.

8.1 The Examen in Crasset's Writings

Crasset talks about the examen in *Considérations sur les principales actions de la vie*,¹⁴⁰ a work that offers short meditations on Gospels, which he believed that would help anyone pray since “there are many persons advanced in prayer who cannot use long meditations; some because they have not time enough to read them, others because they have too little memory to retain them.”¹⁴¹ Crasset, like Ignatius, believed that it is not the quantity of the material that helps one pray better, but how they are retained, and “where there is only a little matter given to meditate on, it is retained without difficulty, digested with profit, and enjoyed all the more that every labourer loves his own work, and takes delight in what cost him something to make [...]. It will not do to load up the mind with too much matter, any more than the stomach with too much food. It hinders digestion.”¹⁴² These meditations are thus reflections for people of all walks of life¹⁴³ and easy to profit from.¹⁴⁴

Precisely because Crasset has such an audience in mind, the meditations presenting the examen are interrogations aimed at provoking reflections. Each of such typical

¹⁴⁰ We will use the English version: Jean Crasset, *Christian Considerations or Devout Meditations for Every Day in the Year* (trans. by Anna H. Dorsey/ introduction by C. Walworth), New York: O’Shea, 1864.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ The great concern of Crasset is to make matter simple allowing people to profit out of it, irrespective of their capacity. “It is true, not everyone is capable of occupying himself with his own thoughts, or of forming reflections, and this is the reason why distinguished men of our time have given to the public long and elaborate meditations, where each truth is set out in all its force, and at full length, so that those who have no great penetration of mind, or cultivation of reason may help themselves out by reading, and have nothing to do in their way of making meditation, except to relish what they read, and form good resolutions on the truths proposed [...]. I confess it is a difficult matter to satisfy everyone; nevertheless, I venture to promise myself, that persons of every sort will be able to make use of these Meditations [...]. Those, in fine, who cannot, or do not wish to meditate, if they read these considerations with a little application of mind, will, I hope, derive no small amount of strength, light, and consolation from them.” *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁴⁴ Crasset had earlier presented meditations and their repetitions when the subject was important. But he chose to do away with these and make the meditations simple. “There are meditations here on all the virtues, and the vices as well; on all the Mysteries of our Lord and of our Lady. Our founder, St. Ignatius, in his Book of Exercises, approved by the Holy See, would have all the most important meditations made twice, either that one may enjoy a second time the truth which had once touched the heart, or that it may be impressed more profoundly on the mind, or, in fine, that by digging again in the same sacred field, one may find there the spring of living water, which was not discovered first [...]. But some persons of a delicate turn, looked upon these repetitions as warmed-over dishes, and besought me to take them away, and to serve up some fresh food every day.” *Ibid.*, p. 6.

meditations contains two to three points on the given subject matter. And wherever they deal with examen, the questions are pointing towards some aspects of life that need greater attention. Crasset does not present the typical five-step examen, but he proposes questions that would provoke reflection. In order to have clearer view of such themes we club them under the headings Towards Repentance, Uncovering Inordinate Attachments, Causes, and Verifying the Behaviour.¹⁴⁵

8.1.1 Towards Repentance

Crasset believed that perfect repentance involved abhorrence of sins, which comes after a good examen. For, one cannot half-reconcile with God, i.e. one cannot be at the same time in a state of grace, and a state of sin. Crasset is of the opinion that penance without a detestation of mortal sin is null and void and so there is a great need to examine oneself thoroughly. For he exhorts,

examine your conscience, and see if your repentance, even up to the present time, has not been imperfect. Do you abhor all your sins? Have you not some cherished secret sin? Have you not some favourite sin which possesses your heart, and which you cannot resolve to destroy? How many times have you not indulged in this sin? How many times have you not promised to forsake it? Is it not a predominant passion? If you were not subject to this sin, you say, you could be a saint. I agree with you, but as long as you remain its slave, you will be as a reprobate.¹⁴⁶

The primary concern then is to lead one to repentance through such examination.

According to Crasset, the main pitfall of examining is the excess or lack of scrupulosity and emphasising the need for a balance in this aspect, he says:

there are some who are not sufficiently scrupulous in the examination of their conscience, and others who fall into the opposite extreme by being too much so. The first are those who do not enter properly into themselves, or devote that time and care which is necessary to the discovery of their offences. The second are those who occupy themselves exclusively in thinking of their sins without making the least effort to conceive a true sorrow for them. This is a cunning and malicious stratagem of the devil, who does not object to confession when contrition is not united to penance; and who, to deprive you of

¹⁴⁵ We present here, under these headings, what Crasset taught about the examen: some instances where the aim is repentance of sins, other moments the focus of the examen is to help one discover one's attachments, at other moments the examen would reveal the cause of suffering, and finally becomes a tool to verify the particular behaviour.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

obtaining the grace of true compunction of conscience, occupies your mind incessantly with what you are to say.¹⁴⁷

This is because God gives the grace to recall all the sins after a good examination and therefore there is no need to be overly anxious. Crasset points out that if it were absolutely necessary to confess those things which one cannot remember, God would make them known; and if He does not enlighten a person, after having spent a reasonable time in examining the conscience, He will pardon freely whatever sins one forget. For, the importance is not in the use of the memory but of the will.¹⁴⁸

8.1.2 Uncovering Inordinate Attachments

Crasset proposes the practice of the examen in order to gradually discover attachments; the practice of a detailed examen helps the faithful to figure out what occupies the centre of one's heart. He urges:

examine your conscience, visit your heart and discover if it has not some inordinate attachment, or if it does not hold some criminal intercourse with creatures. You complain of the ignominies with which you are visited; you are troubled about your gains, and do not know what will become of the treasures which you have amassed; you are consumed with anger, inquietude and malice. Do you know the cause? It is because there is an idol in your heart that you adore; that there is an altar to avarice therein, where you immolate all your desires; and one of voluptuousness, where you offer the sacrifice of body and soul. There are attachments, inclinations, affections, and preferences, which you worship instead of God, forgetting that He is a jealous God, who will have no other gods before Him, and that He will punish in his wrath all who turn aside to worship idols. Behold the cause of your misfortunes.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 121.

¹⁴⁸ "It is more acceptable to Him for you to afflict your heart than your mind; to detest the sins that you remember, and to make greater effort of your will than of your memory. He wishes you to humiliate yourself before Him; to make a sacrifice of your own will, and abandon yourself to his mercy; and consider and apply to yourself, that which it is necessary for you to *do* rather than that which you have to say. Correct this defect in yourself, and ask pardon of Almighty God. It is not necessary for contrition to be sensible in order to be true. It is necessary to conceive a great sorrow for your sins, but it is not necessary to judge of the truth or the sincerity of the sentiment by the emotions you may feel. It is only those, who, in sincerity of soul, wish not to deceive God; who shrink with horror from committing sacrilege; who detest their sins, and determine by the aid of his grace to abandon them, that have true sorrow and compunction. It is a common artifice of the devil to persuade penitents that they are without true repentance if they do not feel a sensible sorrow, in order to trouble them, disquiet them, give them a horror for the sacrament of penance, and thus hold them always slaves to their sins." Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 433.

Affirming that our hearts are the temples of God, Crasset exhorts to maintain purity through examining one's heart, saying, "enter into yourself, examine your heart and see that there is nothing within to offend the majesty and sanctity of God; He is a jealous God, and will not suffer idolatries in his temple. What are those false divinities to whom you sacrifice your desires? What means this shameful traffic? this infamous commerce? these impurities? this lasciviousness? these ambitious thoughts? this hatred and revenge?"¹⁵⁰

Further highlighting the importance of an undivided heart, Crasset talks of finding out the real master through an examination. Since one cannot serve God and the world at the same time, it is important to verify who occupies the heart, whether God or Satan.¹⁵¹ According to Crasset the criteria to find out if attachments exist are the desires of the heart and the type of riches one works for.

The avaricious do not hope for the goods of another life, for who can hope for those things which they place no faith in? If they believe that true riches are in heaven, why do they not make some effort to acquire them? [...] Do they not sacrifice all their thoughts, energies, and mind to it? Do they not place their confidence, and establish their happiness in it? Examine yourself, and see if you are not one of these impious, unfaithful, and idolatrous persons. What are your thoughts? Whither do your desires tend? Why do you give yourself so much trouble and disquietude?¹⁵²

Crasset also calls for a spiritual attitude of complete trust in God and in this the examen serves to find out if one really trusts in God.¹⁵³

With regard to attachments to worldly things, Crasset holds the view that there is nothing more displeasing to God than an avaricious man: "examine your heart, and see if

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Talking about the need to chastise sinners Crasset says, "a body can have only one head; a kingdom can have only one king; a woman can have only one husband, and a man only one master; if he has two, he will love one and hate the other. You cannot, then, serve God and the world, Jesus Christ and Satan. If you love the world you will necessarily hate Jesus Christ. Examine your heart and see whether it is divided, and ascertain which master you serve. If it is Jesus, it is necessary to be all to Him, for He will not accept a divided heart; He desires all or none." Ibid., p. 480.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 484.

¹⁵³ "It is never more necessary to hope than when all seems lost. When all human means fail, we have no refuge but God, and are compelled to fly to Him for succor. He often permits us to suffer with protracted and loathsome diseases for our own profit, to convince us that He alone is the Master of life and death, and to oblige us, like the afflicted woman in the Gospel, to address ourselves to him. Examine your affairs. Why is it that nothing rouses you? Is it not because you depend too much on your own strength, tact, and prudence? Why is it that, notwithstanding all your remedies, you are not cured?" Ibid., p. 578.

it is not the slave of this vice [avarice]. Open your coffers, and look for it amidst your heaps of gold and silver [...]. Alas, is it just to damn one's self to amass thorns which will wound the heart and cause it to bleed. We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing with us beyond the grave."¹⁵⁴ Crasset insists on examining well to detect the attachment because when an avaricious man becomes blind there would be little chance of salvation.¹⁵⁵

8.1.3 Finding Out the Causes

A third category of examen that Crasset puts forth in his meditations is the one that helps people to find out the cause of some behaviour or even that of suffering. Crasset asks,

good men persecute you? Examine your conscience. The wicked persecute you? Rejoice. If the good persecute you, there is reason to fear that you are wicked; if the wicked persecute you, there is cause to believe that you are good. It is impossible to please both God and man; to be loved at the same time by the good and the bad. If I desire only to please men, I must of necessity displease Jesus Christ; if I am hated and persecuted by the wicked, I am loved by Jesus Christ.¹⁵⁶

Crasset points out that such an examen would reveal the real cause behind persecutions and this would in turn indicate the orientation of one's life.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 178.

¹⁵⁵ "He who desires only to enrich himself and hoard up treasures, appropriates to himself all that he can with impunity lay his hands on, and returns nothing [...]. Great profits are nothing more or less than great frauds, and accumulated acts of injustice. How, then, can an avaricious man, who has neither faith, hope, or charity, be saved? An avaricious man is incapable of discovering his sins, because he becomes spiritually blind. And when his conscience whispers, and would reveal them to him, he refuses to listen or do penance. All his frauds and dishonest practices appear to him just and innocent [...]. Restitution becomes an impossibility. As all his passions have contributed to his robberies all assist in defending them. But without restoring his ill-gotten possessions he can never hope for pardon or salvation [...]. Happy are those who content themselves with God." Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 297.

¹⁵⁷ Crasset is of the opinion that though persecution is not agreeable or pleasing to God, it is useful to detach us from creatures, for the love of them separates us from God. When the world is against us we tend to seek refuge in God: 'He sows thorns in your way, that you may not seek your rest and consolation on earth. He does not desire the sin, but it is his will that you should suffer the effects thereof. He hates the persecutor, but loves the persecuted.' Thus here, the results of the examen would act as a pointer of one's life. Cf. *ibid.* under the title 'the grief and persecution suffered by good men.'

In another occasion, Crasset compares the dangers that arise from the world to a tempest in the sea and he argues that an examen would reveal the real cause of such tempest – a tempest arising out of bad company.

The dangers of the world resemble those of the sea. They assail us, either in tempests, which arouse our passions; or stand in our way like rocks, which are evil associates; or pursue and rob us like enemies and pirates, which are the world, the flesh, and the devil; or beset us like calms, which are long seasons of great prosperity; [...]. Examine yourself as to the source and cause of the tempests which toss and buffet you, and fly for succor to Him who is alone able to still them. Alas, my Lord! I have examined myself, and perceive that all my misfortunes arise from my own ill-regulated passions, and the bad companions with whom I constantly associate. Oh my passions excite fearful tempests in my heart! Oh, I now see how pernicious is the example and companionship of the wicked to my soul!¹⁵⁸

A good examen thus would reveal the true causes of passion, disclose the enemies of progress, and show one's true direction of life.

Crasset holds the view that an evaluation of what goes on inside a person, through the examen, reveals the causes of his/her suffering. For, he says that bodily suffering is often the result of spiritual suffering.

The diseased man asked health, and not the pardon of his sins; but as sin is the cause of all our maladies, this wise Physician, to cure the evil, removes the cause. If you are sick, examine your life, and see if it is not your sins which have brought these infirmities on you and ruined your health. Confess that you richly merit what you are suffering; bear your ills with patience, and if you desire to be healed, purge your soul of its vices. Bodily suffering is often the result of spiritual suffering, and to relieve one you must cure the other.¹⁵⁹

Through such instances Crasset insists that the examen truly becomes a tool to reveal the cause of suffering.

8.1.4 Verifying the Behaviour

Crasset proposes the examen as an effective way to evaluate one's behaviour to see if it truly corresponds to charity that is demanded by Christian life. The sentiments of heart

¹⁵⁸ Crasset, *Christian Considerations*, p. 130.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 526.

towards others can be measured in and through this practice of examen, in other words, the examen serves to find out the behaviour in relation to one's neighbour.

To love an enemy, or an unamiable person, is the strongest, greatest, purest, most divine, and meritorious of all affections. Strongest, because he who loves his enemy cannot foil in love for his friend; pure, because God alone can inspire us with love for that which possesses no attractions or amiability; divine, because nature can only triumph over herself by loving those things which do not please her; meritorious, because there is nothing more difficult than to love against our inclinations. Examine and find out wherein your aversions and inclinations lie, and in what manner you sustain the bonds of charity between your neighbour and yourself.¹⁶⁰

Similarly, Crasset also exhorts in the meditation on the necessity of forsaking evil company, to examine one's life to ascertain if there are companions who could lead one astray from spiritual life when he says

good example is beneficial to all men; bad example is pernicious to all men [...]. Example sustains and gives license to sin; it renders it honourable, just, easy, and necessary. One is ashamed of innocence, among the guilty; of chastity, among the impure. One blushes not at sin, provided it is clothed with the example and authority of the great, and sanctioned by custom. Examine yourself. Are you not assisting, by your example, to diffuse pestilence in the world?¹⁶¹

Reiterating that one does not become unhealthy by associating with those who are well, but in the company of those who are ill, Crasset warns against following anything blindly.

Another way to use the examen in verifying the behaviour is by checking how one has utilized the blessings of God. With regard to such examen Crasset has the following remarks:

remember that it is our Lord from whom you have received all that you possess. Examine yourself, and see what use you have made of it up to the present time. You will have to render an account of all that you have received. Much is demanded of him, to whom much is given. How have you employed your understanding, memory, and will, and for whom? What use have you made of the senses of your body, your goods and fortune, your influence, power, and authority, and, above all, of the treasures of grace with which you have been enriched since you came into the world.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 186-187.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 141.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 418.

In this meditation, we can find reflection of the first step of the examen, namely gratitude, that Ignatius proposes in the Exercises. And when Crasset asks to acknowledge the blessings of the Lord, he is clear that it is done through an evaluation or an examination of how one has made use of one's talents.¹⁶³

Crasset clearly states that the way to live such life is by following the words of Jesus, through the imitation of Him.

These are the words of Jesus Christ: shall we not believe them? Ought we not to follow our divine Shepherd, whose voice we know? His doctrine is the rule of our faith; his example the rule of our life; his words are infallible; his actions impeccable. I am a heretic in thought if I believe not the words of Jesus; I am a heretic in heart if I do not imitate the actions of Jesus. Are you a Catholic or a heretic? Examine closely your sentiments and way of life.¹⁶⁴

Thus, for Crasset, a thorough evaluation of one's thoughts would reveal the overall orientation of life based on the sentiments they have created.

8.2 Observations

Though Crasset does not explicitly spell out a five-step examen, he relies on the Spiritual Exercises for his teachings. He proposes meditations with many questions to direct people to a deeper experience of God, and this involves examining one's conscience. The underlying principle in these writings is that of examining and evaluating one's actions and priorities of life. Crasset puts forward the examen in order to evaluate one's behaviour, to discover the cause of sufferings, to come to know better one's life choices and orientations, and thus to lead a person to repentance. Based on what he proposes in the meditations like

¹⁶³ In the meditation, he proposes many questions to help evaluate oneself. "How much have you profited by so many inspirations, sermons, meditations, so many confessions and communions? One good communion would suffice to make a saint. How many have you made? Are you any better? Have you corrected *one defect*? Have you acquired one virtue? What account will you render? Oh Lord, enter not into judgment with thy poor servant, for none can justify him if Thou dost search him: none save him if Thou dost condemn him. God calls us at all times and seasons to demand of us an account of our administration of his goods, by the interior reproaches of our conscience; by his voices, which He makes heard in the depths of our soul; by confessors and preachers; by angels and men, who accuse us, and represent to our Lord how we waste his goods." By these words Crasset makes it clear that it is an account of all the actions one has done. Ibid., p. 418.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 288. Here, Crasset deals with imitation of Christ as a meditation on second Friday after Easter. The scripture words 'He goes before them, and the sheep follow Him, because they know his voice' is used to exhort people to closely evaluate the style of life.

keeping away from hatred, discovering attachments and relying on confession, etc. we can conclude that Crasset clearly leans towards a moralistic examen. Whenever he points to sins as the cause of sufferings and proposes the examen to verify the attachments the overall tone of these instructions is moralistic.

9 Giovanni Battista Scaramelli¹⁶⁵

Giovanni Battista Scaramelli was born on 23 December 1687 in Rome, Italy. At the age of nineteen, having already completed philosophy, he entered the Jesuit novitiate in 1706.¹⁶⁶ After the vows, he did a year of study in rhetoric and later taught at Ragusa and Loreto. Scaramelli completed his theology at Roman College from 1714 to 1718 and did the tertianship in Florence.¹⁶⁷ His talent for preaching took him to popular missions in Ascoli, Marcas, Umbria and Toscana regions. Scaramelli, along with Francesco Saverio Bianchi,¹⁶⁸ dedicated many years in preaching, with great success; yet Scaramelli is known popularly by his classical works *Direttorio ascetico* and *Direttorio mistico*. He died in Macerata, in 1752, before seeing his works published.¹⁶⁹

Though Scaramelli dedicated almost his entire life as popular mission preacher, what is lesser known is that he was gifted with fine intellect and a strong spiritual life. The

¹⁶⁵ We include the works of this much talked about Jesuit, not only as a representative of his era, rather also because his works have definitely shaped the course of ascetical and mystical theology. Moreover, he shares spiritual principles with his French contemporaries and so we treat him here.

¹⁶⁶ Scaramelli joined the novitiate of S. Andrea on 21 September, and he had Fabio Manzi and Gerolamo Arnolfino as Rectors. Cf. Ottavio Marchetti, "Un'opera inedita su di una mistica del 700 attribuita al P. Scaramelli S.I.," in *AHSI* 2 (1933), pp. 230-257, here p. 253. In 1709 Scaramelli's brother Philip also joined the novitiate, who went on to become a prominent rector in various houses of the Roman province. Philip Scaramelli was the provincial at the death of Giovanni Scaramelli. Cf. Leo A. Hogue, "The *Direttorio Mistico* of J. B. Scaramelli S.I.," in *AHSI* 9 (1940), pp. 1-39, here p. 3.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Armando Guidetti, "Scaramelli, Giovanni Battista," in *DHCJ* vol. IV, p. 3512.

¹⁶⁸ Scaramelli and Bianchi worked together for more than twenty-five years, and they enjoyed popularity all over Italy. See Hogue, "The *Direttorio*," pp. 5ff.

¹⁶⁹ During his life, he published only the life of a Franciscan religious named Maria Crocifissa Satellico. Other than the two *Directorios*, Scaramelli also has contributed much through his work *Discernimento degli spiriti*. *Direttorio ascetico* was written when he was in S. Sepolcro, most probably by 1750 and had the approval by July of 1751. Most probably *Direttorio mistico* was also written here. Though during his life, as permission was denied for this work, he constantly revised his works. Treatise VI of this work was published in 1753 and rest of the work was published by Simone Occhi in 1754, against the fear of being condemned. Cf. *ibid.*; Guibert, *The Jesuits*, pp. 416-417; Marchetti "Un'opera inedita," p. 255. With regard to the controversy surrounding the publication see below, especially note 173.

presence of learned men at San Andrea¹⁷⁰ did play an important role in Scaramelli's life and teaching. His greatest talent was his ability as a preacher as well as a director of souls, both of which were duly recognized and promoted from the early years of formation.¹⁷¹ Scaramelli made use of his knowledge in humanities and rhetoric in his preaching, and as a result many were led to God, and the *Direttorios* was born in such context.¹⁷² The value of these works lies in the fact that they are addressed to ordinary people who are interested in the extraordinary ways of perfection. And the fact that the work was composed in vernacular Italian, and not in Latin, also calls our attention. These directories of Scaramelli have contributed much to the spirituality in general, especially in mystical theology. Even though the Inquisition had refused permission to publish the *Direttorio mistico*,¹⁷³ once

¹⁷⁰ "During these years at S. Andrea, Scaramelli had a splendid opportunity of laying a solid foundation for his religious life. His superiors and spiritual directors were all men of exceptional knowledge and practice of religious perfection. His rector and master of novices during his first year of novitiate was Father Fabio Mansi, a man conspicuous for his self-abnegation and for his prudence and skill in the direction of others. The socius to the master of novices, during this first year, was Father Fortunatus Accarigi, who was looked upon by his contemporaries as a 'living compendium of the rules of St. Ignatius and a man filled with God.' In Scaramelli's second year at St. Andrea, the two offices of rector and master of novices were filled by Father Jerome Arnolpino, later to become master of Tertiaries at Florence. Then, there was Father Benedict Rogacci, a man of great erudition and piety, and the author of several spiritual books, who was Spiritual Father, socius to the master of novices, and professor of rhetoric, successively, during Scaramelli's three years at St. Andrea." Hogue, "The *Direttorio*," pp. 3-4.

¹⁷¹ "Because of his proficiency in the humanities, Scaramelli was required to spend but one year in the study of rhetoric, instead of the usual two; and because of his previous study of philosophy before he entered the Society, he was dispensed entirely from the customary three-year course in this subject. Accordingly, in 1709, he was sent to the college at Ragusa in Umbria, to act as prefect and to teach the humanities. In 1712 he was transferred to the college at Loreto where he performed similar duties for two more years. Returning to Rome in 1714, he began the study of theology at the Roman College. In his second year of theology, he was appointed 'repetitor,' or tutor, in philosophy at the German College. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1717, and completed his theological studies the following year, during which he also acted as tutor in theology for the German students, and sodality director for the younger seminarians." *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁷² In the very first chapter of *Direttorio mistico*, Scaramelli talks about the purpose of writing it: "quasi in ogni luogo si trova qualche anima, che Iddio conduce per queste strade straordinarie ad un'alta perfezione..." Giovanni Battista Scaramelli, *Direttorio mistico*, Torino: Giacinto Marietti, 1879, p. 1. Hogue elaborates on this when he says that the *Direttorio mistico* was born from his experience as mission preacher. "Quite early in the exercise of his sacred ministry, Scaramelli became interested in the direction of contemplative souls. In 1728 he began to direct the mystical life of Venerable Maria Crocifissa. About ten years later, he undertook the spiritual direction of the contemplative Angelina Cospari whom he guided in the way of perfection until his own death. [...] he was prompted to undertake the composition of the *Direttorio Mistico* by the discovery from experience that very few confessors really understood the manner by which God leads contemplative souls to the heights of perfection. Hence, it occurred to him that he could do nothing more pleasing to God than to promote the advancement of these privileged souls by shedding some light on their direction for the benefit of their spiritual guides." Hogue, "The *Direttorio*," p. 13. See also Guibert, *The Jesuits*, p. 311.

¹⁷³ The work was submitted to the censors by the end of 1743 and Scaramelli had to wait till November of the following year to have a word from them, through the General. In April of 1745 he was told in clear terms that since the work was in vernacular he could not publish it.

published it enjoyed immense popularity, and many term these two works as a classic of spirituality.¹⁷⁴

9.1 The Examen in the *Direttorio*

The *Direttorio*, sometimes also called as ‘Guide to Spiritual Life,’ is addressed to directors of souls as well as to all Christians who look for perfection. In the very first article of *Direttorio ascetico* where Scaramelli deals with the essence and instruments of Christian perfection, he points out that true perfection consists in charity towards God and neighbour. Such a perfection is constituted by the moral virtues and the evangelical counsels: “non v’è dubbio, che ancora esse devono potentemente concorrere alla perfezione del Cristiano; non però come essenza, ma solo come strumenti di un tal lavoro.”¹⁷⁵ For, he holds the view that when a person uses the means like prayer, meditation and sacraments he/she is also engaged in uprooting the disordered passions that act as impediments to perfection and in acquiring virtues:

nel tempo stesso che la persona divota ad opera i mezzi per sollevarsi alla perfezione, aiutandosi con le meditazioni, con l’orazione, con l’uso de’ sacramenti e cose simili va ancora sterpando le passioni mal regolate, che sono gl’impedimenti, va acquistando le virtù, che sono le disposizioni, e va esercitandafi in affetti e in opere di carità che è il fine delle sue industrie e delle sue fatiche, da cui viene perfezionato il di lui spirito. E più mette egli di questi mezi, e più toglie di quegli ostacoli, e più pone delle predette disposizioni, più si va riscaldando nel fuoco del divino amore.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ The first edition of *Direttorio Mistico* was out in 1754, two years after the death of the author. Within two years, the second edition and in four years a third edition also appeared. By the end of the century there were eleven Italian editions. Later there were also four more editions and a compendium. It was in 1778 that the first translation into Latin was made and henceforth there were translations to Spanish (1790), German (1855), French (1863), Polish (1888), and English (1913). The popularity of Scaramelli’s work can be gauged from the fact that except the works of St. Theresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, there was nothing popular than *Direttorio Mistico* in mysticism. Cf. Hogue, “The *Direttorio*,” pp. 14, 37.

¹⁷⁵ Giovanni Battista Scaramelli, *Direttorio ascetico* vol. I, Torino: Giacinto Marietti, 1879, p. 13. (English translation: John Baptist Scaramelli, *Directorium Asceticum* vols. I-IV, Dublin: William B. Kelly, 1870-1871).

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

Basing himself on the teachings of Thomas Aquinas, Scaramelli visualizes such growth in charity in three levels or degrees, namely incipient, growing and perfect charity.¹⁷⁷

Scaramelli treats the examen not in *Direttorio mistico* but only in the *Direttorio ascetico* which he divides into two sections: the first on the means of perfection, meant for all, and the second section, specific to beginners, on the removal of hindrance to charity.

Il primo trattato, in cui parlerò de' mezzi per la perfezione, è comune ad ogni anima, in qualunque stato ella si ritrovi; perchè delle preghiere, dell'orazione mentale, de'sacramenti, della presenza di Dio e d'altre simiglianti cose, hanno tutti bisogno, ed incipienti e proficienti e perfetti, per profittare nel proprio slato. Il secondo trattato in modo particolare appartiene agli incipienti, perchè ad essi specialmente si conviene rimuovere con incessante mortificazione gl'impedimenti della carità, che sono i peccati, gli abiti cattivi e le passioni mal regolate, e scorrette [...]. Il terzo trattato particolarmente conviene ai proficienti, i quali avendo già molto fiaccate le loro passioni attendono più di proposito, con l'esercizio delle virtù morali, a mettere le disposizioni, che positivamente dispongono l'anima all'accrescimento della divina carità. Il quarto trattato compete ai perfetti che superati gli impedimenti de' principianti, ed acquistate le virtù de proficienti, hanno di proprio starsene con Dio uniti per mezzo del santo amore.¹⁷⁸

Through the placement of the examen in the first section, Scaramelli makes it amply clear that this exercise is meant as a means of perfection for everyone and not limited only for the beginners.

9.1.1 The Daily Examination of Conscience

Scaramelli dedicates five chapters on the examen¹⁷⁹ and he defines the daily examination of conscience as a secret confession between God and the faithful, in order to cancel one's sins on a daily basis. The aim of such confession is purity of heart and progress in perfection. He differentiates the sacramental confession and the examen in the following way: "due sono le confessioni con cui può l'uomo spirituale cancellare le colpe di cui la sua coscienza è machiata: una è sacramentale; es si fa a' piedi del confessore; l'altra è

¹⁷⁷ Aquinas attributes three stages of growth to charity. The first he calls incipient charity, the second growing charity, and the third perfect, from this it follows that the persons in whom charity resides are divided into the three classes of beginners, of those who are advancing, and of the perfect. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p. 24.

¹⁷⁹ Article IX terms the daily Examination of Conscience as the eighth means of attaining Christian perfection. The first chapter cites the authority of the Church Fathers, the second chapter presents the reasons and the third describes the manner of making this exercise. While the fourth chapter is about the particular examen, the fifth provides some practical hints of doing the examen.

solitaria, e si fa da sola a solo tra l'anima e Dio senza l'intervento di alcuna persona, e chiamasi esame di coscienza quotidiano, perchè suole praticarsi ogni giorno da quelle persone que bramano la purità del cuore e gli avanzamenti nella perfezione.”¹⁸⁰ The major difference between these confessions lies in the gravity of sins – when one is guilty of grievous sins he is obliged to reveal it in sacramental confession; when there is only a slight fault it may be revealed to the confessor in order to attain perfection. Scaramelli sees greater advantage of confession in daily examen as it does not require fixed place or time;¹⁸¹ that is to say this exercise can be made at any place, at any moment and whenever one wants.

9.1.1.1 Reasons for Doing the Examen

Scaramelli bases himself on the teachings of many of the Church Fathers to affirm that right from the early years of Church, the daily examination of conscience was the most powerful means to speedily attain purity of heart and through this Christian perfection. The reasons which make the examen central in the process of perfection, according to Scaramelli, are based on two facts, namely corrupt human nature and the final judgement. Scaramelli elaborates on the weak human nature as follows:

la ragione principale, per cui i santi con tanta premura ci inculcano d'invigilare sopra le nostre azioni con l'esame d'ogni giorno, si fonda nella corruttela della nostra natura originata dal peccato del nostro primo progenitore, per cui tornano sempre a ripullulare in noi gli stessi difetti, a rinascere le stesse colpe ed a riaccendersi le stesse passioni. Onde è necessario osservare almeno una volta ogni giorno quali sono questi viziosi germogli, che spuntano nel nostro cuore, per risecarli col ferro d'una vera contrizione.¹⁸²

Just like a vine or a tree that has been pruned gives forth new shoots and tendrils, in the human hearts too there would be poisonous growth that require cutting away. Through a good confession one uproots the poisonous growth of his/her faults and then must be vigilant so as not to allow further growth.

Così stolto dovrebbe chiamarsi quel cristiano che dopo aver con qualche buona confessione svelti dall'anima i pessimi germogli delle sue colpe e risecate le superfluità

¹⁸⁰ Scaramelli, *Direttorio ascetico*, vol. I, p. 206.

¹⁸¹ In sacramental confession a priest is needed as a minister, and a fixed place and time must be chosen. In the preceding article on Sacramental Confession Scaramelli explains that in order to acquire the Spirit of Christ, which is acquiring Christian perfection, a lawfully-approved priest is a must. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 179ff.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 209.

dannose dei suoi difetti, non volesse poi con un esatto esame di coscienza tornare nuovamente ogni giorno a troncare, a svellere, a potare, sapendo che ogni giorno torna a rinascere qualche erba cattiva, torna a spuntare qualche ramo di peccato, torna a ravvivarsi qualche passione, e che senza questa potazione continua il bel giardino dell'anima presto diverrebbe un orrido spinaio di colpe.¹⁸³

Thus, Scaramelli is convinced that the examen is indeed helpful in checking the possibility of growth of sins daily.

The practice of examining the conscience is like the pruning-knife that need to be used often so as not to allow such growth go out of hand, because Scaramelli points out that the vices keep coming back in spite of our strivings for progress in spiritual life.

Credetemi, i mali troncati ripullulano, scacciati ritornano, estinti si riaccendono, e sopiti vengono nuovamente a risvegliarsi. Dunque è poco averli una sol volta potati; bisogna tornare spesso, anzi, se sia possibile, sempre a potarli, perche sempre, se pur non ti vuoi accecare, troverai in te materia degna di potazione. [...] finchè vivi in questo corpo mortale, per quanto faccia, per quanto ti adoperi per profittare nello Spirito, t'inganni, se credi che i tuoi vizi siano morti e non piuttosto soppressi, e mortificati e perciò non bisogna fidarsi: ma tornare ogni giorno ad invigilare sopra di essi con nuovi esami, e ad abatterli con nuovi colpi di contrizione.¹⁸⁴

Scaramelli insists on the daily need for vigilance because sins are so persistent and if ignored they make a return in the first instance.

From the same weak human nature, it follows that one can never completely win over the enemy within, but can only overcome or subdue it: “hai dentro di te un nemico che si può vincere, si può soggiogare, ma non già mai estermiare: vogli o non vogli, vivrà sempre con te, e sempre ti farà cruda guerra. Qual è questo tuo gran nemico immortale, o per dir meglio, quelli tuoi nemici che non possono mai morire, se non che con la tua morte? Eccoli: le tue passioni, i tuoi vizi e mancamenti che da questi sogliono essere generati.”¹⁸⁵ And this is the reason that one has to seek them out every day in the examination of conscience, by diligently searching: “vanne dunque in cerca ogni giorno con l'esame di coscienza: e dopo avergli scoperti con una diligente ricerca, feriscili con la spada del dolore, abbattili con la costanza dei propositi, acciocchè rimangano, se non affatto morti (giacchè

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 209-210.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 210.

questo non è possibile), almeno snervati e mortificati, e non siano d'impedimento ai progressi della tua perfezione.”¹⁸⁶ Scaramelli further affirms the importance of daily examining one's conscience when he says “nel fondo della nostr'anima entrano ogni giorno acque torbide di peccati leggieri. Chi non vuol perire, dice Agostino, vuoti ogni giorno ad esempio de' marinari, la sentina dell'anima con un diligente e doloroso esame di sua coscienza.”¹⁸⁷

Borrowing a comparison from St. Augustine, Scaramelli says that a ship, however wonderfully built, cannot resist some water from entering inside since it is made of many parts. Likewise, our weak nature permits some sins; just like the ship needs to run the pump to throw out the water, we need the examination to keep clean of such venial or other sins.

Così l'uomo in questo mare di miserie, in cui è costretto a vivere a guisa di nave fragile, è composto di potenze fiacche, di sensi deboli, di passioni labili; nè è possibile che all'urto di tante tentazioni, all'incontro di tante occasioni e pericoli, non faccia qualche rottura, per cui entrino nella di lui anima almeno peccati piccoli e colpe leggieri, le quali moltiplicate potrebbero col progresso del tempo portarlo al naufragio della colpa mortale, o almeno gli impedirebbero sicuramente l'arrivo al porto della bramata perfezione. Dunque, che si avrà a fare per impedire tanto male, che potrebbe nascere a poco a poco? Eccolo: cavar fuori ogni giorno dalla coscienza i peccati che si commettono con un diligente esame; estrarli con la contrizione, chiudere le rotture che si vanno facendo nell'anima, con fermi propositi, e constanti risoluzioni.¹⁸⁸

For Scaramelli, then, the examen is an efficacious means to keep clean one's conscience on a daily basis.

Scaramelli passionately argues that it is idle to dream of attaining Christian perfection without examining one's conscience. Since virtue cannot grow in the company of vice, the heart has to be cleared of the roots of vices daily, to facilitate such perfection.

Da questa ragione ne discende un'altra con cui ad evidenza si prova che senza questo esame di coscienza non si può acquistare la cristiana perfezione; [...] senza una tale quotidiana ricerca non possono sbarbarsi dalla nostra anima i vizi, i peccati e i mancamenti a cui ella è sì proclive; è anche manifesto, che senza esame neppure possono crescere le virtù, e molto meno può dal nostro cuore spuntare il bel fiore della divina carità. Acciocchè il grano cresca nei campi, bisogna prima svellere i triboli e le spine;

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 210-211.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 210.

bisogna prima ripurgarli dai sassi da cui sono ingombrati: altrimenti dice Cristo, che quelle soffocheranno la semenza; e questi le toglieranno il necessario umore. *Et aliud cecidit super petram. Natum aruit, quia non habebat humoreir* (Luc. c. 8). Così non può il grano eletto delle virtù nascere e poi fiorire nel campo del nostro cuore, se prima non sono sterpate le radici dei vizi e delle passioni nocive, e se prima non sono tolte quelle colpe, che a poco a poco l'indurano, e lo fanno divenire di sasso [...]. La virtú non può crescere in compagnia dei vizi. Acciocchè quella fiorisca, si facciamo questi marcire. Togli tutto ciò che è superfluo e vizioso, e subito sorgerà ciò che è salubre e virtuoso. Sortirà in utilità e vantaggio del tuo spirito tutto ciò che sottrarrai alle tue cupidigie. Dunque, conclude il santo, attendiamo a potare con diligenti esami i cattivi germogli delle colpe, de' vizi, e de' difetti, se bramiamo, che nell'orto della nostr'anima crescano i fiori di tutte le virtù.¹⁸⁹

As we have mentioned earlier, this is in line with the teaching of St. Augustine who said that our hearts will be filled with divine love in proportion to the degree we empty our selfish desires; our heart will only be full of love when they are perfectly emptied of every disordered inclination.

Scaramelli too insists on the need of purification saying that the flower of paradise blooms only in pure hearts, in conscience cleansed from all evil lusts and hence an examination is of vital importance:

il fine di tutti i precetti, e per conseguenza il compimento della nostra perfezione, è la carità. Ma questa è un fiore, che solo nasce nel cuori puri e nelle coscienze illibate che d'ogni mala concupiscenza son ben purgate. Ma per ridurre il cuore ad una simile illibatezza, io non credo che mezzo migliore vi possa essere, che attendere a purificarlo con frequenti esami, a mondarlo col dolore de' nostri falli, a premunirlo con forti proponimenti da ogni bruttura, e non lasciar mai passare alcun giorno in cui non gli si dia una tale coltura. Dunque attenda a questo santo esercizio di sovente esaminarsi chi desidera che nascano nel suo cuore rose vermiglie di carità, gigli di purità, viole di umiltà e di penitenza, e i fiori di tutte le virtù, da cui sia reso perfetto, adorno e vago: onde in lui discenda a deliziarsi, quali in ameno giardino, il re del cielo.¹⁹⁰

Scaramelli further argues in favour of practicing the examination not only because the Christian sages recommended it but many great philosophers also practiced it to improve their life. The ancient philosophers like Pythagoras, Seneca, Cicero, and so on practiced as well as recommended it to their disciples, and this is another of reasons to undertake this

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 211.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 211-212.

practice, especially those who aspire greater perfection.¹⁹¹ Scaramelli also argues that when we frequently examine ourselves we escape the otherwise rigorous judgment.¹⁹²

9.1.1.2 The Practice of the Examen

Scaramelli proposes the manner of doing the examen consisting of five parts. In the first step, he emphasizes the need to begin the examen with gratitude, by putting oneself in the presence of God in profound adoration: “in primo luogo: posta l’anima alla presenza di Dio con un atto di fede, e di profonda adorazione, lo ringrazi di tutti i benefizi, che ha ricevuti dalla di lui beneficenza, ma specialmente in quel giorno.” And, Scaramelli, uses the words of St. Bernard, to remind that the moment of the examen is the best time to thank God, “bisogna grandemente guardarsi di non esser tardo e lento a rendere a Dio le dovute grazie de’ favori che ci comparte,: perche è legge di gratitudine, che di qualunque dono, o sia grande, o sia picciolo, o sia mediocre, si diano i debiti ringraziamenti al dator di ogni bene.”¹⁹³ The examen becomes the most opportune time because here the soul strikes a balance between what it has received from God and the response to Him, and such a gratitude disposes the soul to sorrow which will follow later when one becomes conscious of the ingratitude that he/she shows though the sins.

¹⁹¹ Pythagoras advocated the examen to his disciples to be undertaken every evening; Cicero called for an account of himself every night, and Seneca made judgement of his actions every night before the lamp was put out. “Nè gli parerà di far molto, impiegando ogni giorno qualche spazio di tempo in tali ricerche e ripulimenti del proprio spirito, se rifletterà che anche i filosofi antichi, benché gentili, stimarono necessari questi esami quotidiani per miglioramento della propria vita [...]. Pitagora gli prescrisse a’ suoi discepoli: onde molti de’ suoi seguaci ebbero il costume di praticarlo ogni sera con somma cura. Cicerone racconta di sè, che ogni sera si esaminava circa quel che aveva detto, udito ed operato in quel giorno. Seneca confessa di sè, che ogni sera faceva questo giudicato sopra le proprie azioni. La sera, dic’egli, dopo che nella mia camera è estinto il lume, e dopo che la mia consorte, consapevole del mio costume, si è posta in silenzio, esamino tutta la scorsa giornata, ripenso a quanto ho fatto e a quanto ho detto: niente celo a me stesso, di niuna cosa faccio passaggio. Poi trovando d’aver commesso qualche errore, dico a me stesso: questa volta te lo perdono; ma avverti di non cadervi mai più. Or se i gentili, mossi dall’amore della filosofia usavano giornalmente tali esami, quanto più dovranno praticarli i cristiani per il desiderio di piacere a Dio con la purità del cuore, per brama di conseguire la perfezione soprannaturale e di giungere al possesso di quei beni incomparabili che ai perfetti sono preparati colassù tra le stelle?” Ibid., p. 212.

¹⁹² “Posto questo pensi un poco seriamente il lettore, quanto sarà terribile il giudizio di Dio; quanto rigoroso l’esame che si farà delle sue colpe; quanto inesorabile il giudice; quanto severa la pena che gli sarà per sentenza definitiva prescritta: e l’assicuro che gli nascerà in cuore il desiderio di esaminarsi ogni giorno ed anche più volte il giorno, per non soggiacere ad un giudizio sì formidabile.” Ibid., pp. 212-213. He puts forward the case of St Mary Magdalen de Pazzi to indicate the rigour of divine judgement that one might encounter. See *ibid.*, p. 213.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

For Scaramelli the second step of asking God for light to know one's sins and negligence is the most necessary element because

l'amor proprio ci lusinga, e ci oscura l'occhio della mente; onde non vediamo i nostri mancamenti, o gli miriamo attenuati, e gli riputiamo minori di quel che sono. [...] E però importa molto domandare a Dio lume, che dissipi dalla nostra mente quelle caligini, che l'amor proprio vi ha ingenerate; acciocchè possiamo con vista interna, chiara e purgata discernere tutte le colpe di cui siamo macchiati, penetrarne la malizia, e ponderarla, come si conviene. Molto più, che mancando questa cognizione, mancherebbe anche il pentimento de' peccati.¹⁹⁴

Since self-love deludes people and blinds the eyes it is important to ask God to dispel such darkness so that the eyes of the soul may discover all the sins and penetrate their malice. Similarly, without such self-knowledge there is no true repentance of sins as God bestows the grace of compunction after we become conscious of the enormity of faults.¹⁹⁵

The third step consists in diligently searching for sins and imperfections into which one has fallen during the particular period. Here, Scaramelli proposes a rigorous examination: “faccia una diligente ricerca di tutti i peccati ed imperfezioni, che ha commesse in quel giorno, a nella notte precedente [...]. Bisogna, che ti esami diligentemente circa tutti i pensieri, che ci sono passati per la mente; circa tutte le parole, che ti sono escite dalla bocca: e circa tutte le opere che hai date alla luce; nè per far ciò v'è tempo migliore che quello della sera, prima di porti a giacere nel proprio letto.”¹⁹⁶ Scaramelli, taking cue from St. Augustine, proposes ‘setting up of a tribunal within oneself’ and judging life where the conscience could stand as witness against oneself. He warns that such examination should not be made just in passing, often ignoring the minor mistakes; on the contrary one has to be strict with oneself even in minor sins, just as one would do with grievous faults. The exactness that is needed in the examen is described as “ciò che in un principiante può dirsi colpa leggiera da non farne gran caso, non può dirsi peccato leggiero in chi sia già avanzato nella perfezione; ma in quelli ogni colpa deve riputarsi

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 215.

¹⁹⁵ “Iddio non dona la grazia della contrizione, le con una previa cognizione non ha prima mostrato all'anima la gravezza delle sue colpe. Compunctionis gratia menti non infunditur, nisi prius ipsa ei peccati magnitudo monstretur.” Cf. Ibid. Here he quotes these words from St. Gregory Lib. v. in I Reg., cap. II.

¹⁹⁶ Scaramelli, *Direttorio ascetico*, vol. I, p. 215.

grave.”¹⁹⁷ Thus, Scaramelli insists that while examining one should have an all-observing eye while also being attentive to take note of every defect; carefully examining with rigour and exactness while evaluating words, actions and thoughts that have passed through the mind.¹⁹⁸

In the fourth step of the examen there is the act of sorrow and contrition for the sins one has committed. Scaramelli says just like we thank God for the good works during the day, we should also beg pardon from God, with tears, for all the sins.

Ma però quello dolore deve essere, quanto è più possibile, intimo, e pieno d’ interna confusione, ed umiltà [...]. Deve l’anima, riconoscendo le sue mancanze, e le sue infedeltà praticate con Dio, presentargli avanti a guisa d’un figliuolo cattivo, ed ingrato avanti un Padre amoroso [...]. Con che ardire potrò alzar gli occhi in volto ad un padre sì buono, essendo un figliuolo tanto cattivo! Mi vergogno di aver fatto operazioni indegne della mia condizione: mi arrossisco d’essere stato degenerare dal mio buon Padre. Occhi miei, scioglietevi in fonti di lagrime; si riempi la mia faccia di confusione: si ricuopra di rossore il mio volto: ed il mio spirito rimanga assorbito in ombre di profonda umiliazione.¹⁹⁹

He is insistent that the sorrow for one’s sins must be heartfelt – with inner confusion and humility – because more humble and sincere the sorrow, the greater will the purge of all defilement be. As part of the fourth step, Scaramelli proposes the imposition of some penances when there are notable defects, and this would be chosen based on the counsel of spiritual directors.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 216.

¹⁹⁸ Here Scaramelli uses the words of Chrysostom: “ma per ottener questo bisogna che el processo che farai contro te stesso, sia formato con grande esattezza. Bisogna che ti esami diligentemente circa tutti i pensieri, che ci sono passati per la mente; circa tutte le parole, che ci sono uscite dalla bocca: e circa tutte le opere che hai date alla luce; nè per far ciò v’è tempo migliore che questo della sera, prima di porti a giacere nel proprio letto.” Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ In the treaty Scaramelli narrates the examples of saints who relied on penances, including the extraordinary case of a monk named Eusebius who chastised himself for forty years. But he is quick to add that the choice of penance should be done in consultation with one’s spiritual guide. “Non ho già raccontato questo fatto perchè stimi che debbano imitarsi penitenze sì strane, ma solo acciocchè si vegga essere stato sempre costumbe de’ santi di Dio imporre a se stessi qualche mortificazione per castigo ed emenda degli errori commessi. Nell’uso poi di tali penitenze deve ciascuno consultare le sue forze corporali e spirituali; e col consiglio del suo direttore sceglierle tali che non l’aggravino soverchiamente, e nel tempo stesso gli siano di freno e di ritegno per non trascorrere nuevamente.” Ibid., p. 217.

The fifth step of the daily examen is making a firm decision not to offend God anymore. Here Scaramelli shares the view of St. John Chrysostom who said that such purpose should be so efficacious as to instil into the soul a holy fear of ever again relapsing into sin. For greater effectiveness of such amendment Scaramelli suggests that the purpose of amendment must be specific, like

quella passione, quell'affetto che ti ha trasportato, quello in particolare metti alla tortura; quello tormenta col dolore; quello abbatti col propositi, acciocchè non abbia più ardire di assalirti, o almeno ti assalga con minor forza; poichè non sono i proponimenti generali, ma bensì i particolari, quelli che sogliono trionfare de' nostri vizi; perchè prendendo questi di mira ora l'uno, ora l'altro de' nostri mancamenti, rendono la volontà forte, robusta, costante per fare ora a questo, ora a quello generosa resistenza; onde siegue che a poco a poco rimangono tutti abbattuti.²⁰¹

More than the focused attention on faults and their gradual removal Scaramelli recommends going down to the depths of soul to find the origin of them when he says,

bisogna ancora indagar l'origine de' nostri mancamenti; bisogna andare al fondo per ritrovare la radice, da cui pullulano questi cattivi germogli, affine di sbarbarli dal nostro cuore. Che serve scuotere le fronde, o tagliare i rami d'un albero infruttuoso, che getta ombre nocive sopra il terreno? Se non si svelle la radice, nulla giova: perchè tornerà in breve a verdeggiare con tutte le sue foglie più rigoglioso di prima. Così poco giovano i proponimenti, finchè non si toglie la cagione, e l'origine, donde nascono i nostri difetti; perchè torneranno questi sempre, ad onta di qualunque nostra risoluzione a macchiar la nostra anima.²⁰²

Thus, a thorough examen is needed to go down to the roots of the evil weeds and then to completely shake them off.

Scaramelli insists that the examination of conscience should end with an Our Father and a Hail Mary as well as a fervent prayer to God for the grace never to offend Him again. He believes that such a prayer is necessary to put into practice all that one has promised, because we can do nothing without the help of God. Scaramelli reiterates that this exercise of perfection can be practiced by everyone – even those not advanced in meditations or those with limited education.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 218.

²⁰² Ibid.

Quello è un esercizio praticabile da chiechessia, anche da quelli che per la loro rozzezza non sono capaci d'usare altri mezzi spirituali, per es di leggere libri devoti e di meditare. Chiunque è abile a confessarsi, è anche abile ad esaminarsi giornalmente ed a pentirsi delle proprie mancanze. La seconda, che da tali esami non deve esimersi alcuno: non dico solo quelli che attendono alla perfezione, ma nè anche quelli che non la professano, e non la curano; perchè quello è un mezzo non solo importante per perfezionarsi, ma anche per salvarsi.²⁰³

The natural tendency of all humans is to deteriorate spiritually when unattended for a long time and so Scaramelli warns against ignoring this exercise.²⁰⁴

Further, Scaramelli points out that human soul is under constant attack from evil and owing to its nature the soul might possibly yield to such allurements; the practice of daily examination could rectify such damages. Comparing the soul to a house in need of repair or a deteriorating farm or a damaged-garment that needs repair, Scaramelli spells out ways to restore the original state:

tant'è la forza delle nostre passioni che c'inclinano ai male; tante le istigazioni de' demoni che al male ci incitano; tante le occasioni pericolose che al male ci allettano, che non è possibile che la povera anima a tanti urti qualche volta non cada, che a tante attrattive alcune volte non si arrenda, e non si vada disordinando con suo gran danno. Se dunque non si risarciscono ogni giorno queste perdite, che pur troppo si fanno ogni giorno, con gli esami della coscienza, col pentimento e coi propositi, sarà necesario, ch'ella si sconcerti tanto, finchè vada miseramente a perire, come suole accadere tutto giorno a quei cristiani trascurati, che non si valgono di tali mezzi.²⁰⁵

Scaramelli also reminds that since the harm done by the vices enters slowly and is not easily noticed, we need to frequently look into ourselves. A daily search of conscience and the subsequent repentance and renewal indeed help to prevent deterioration, and therefore “bisogna spesso ricercare se stesso; spesso discutere la propria coscienza e col pentimento rinnovarsi e ristabilirsi nello stato primiero.”²⁰⁶

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 221.

²⁰⁴ As we have said earlier, the two reasons for practicing the examen were weak human nature and eternal judgment. Scaramelli believes that by frequently examining oneself, with due compunction, one escapes the severe and rigorous judgement. “Cornelio a Lapide spiega così al mio proposito queste parole: se noi ci esamineremo, discuteremo la nostra coscienza, la esporremo al cimento di rigorose ricerche, e trovando peccati, gli laveremo colle lagrime di contrizione, non saremo da Dio giudicati; cioè non saremo da lui puniti nel suo tremendo giudizio.” Ibid., p. 212.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 222.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

With regard to the frequency of the examination Scaramelli adopts the traditional view that it must be made twice daily – morning and evening. However, in case when one is not able to keep this ideal, the next best thing is to take up this practice at night, “essendo già terminata la giornata, questo è il tempo opportuno di prendere dalla sua coscienza il conto delle proprie operazioni: sì perchè le tenebre istesse e la quiete della notte conciliano attenzione e raccoglimento, e conseguentemente anche pentimento delle proprie mancanze.”²⁰⁷ The author of the *Direttorio* reminds that it would be impossible to overcome all the passions at once and one needs to uproot the vices one by one. With this effect, Scaramelli proposes the particular examen and we take a look at it here.

9.1.2 The Particular Examen

All the spiritual masters teach the importance of proceeding methodically when it comes to the practice of particular examen and that the subject matter must be specific. Scaramelli in his *Direttorio* says that the predominant passion or vice should occupy all the energy and that one has to use all the weapons available in fighting it. With regard to the subject matter Scaramelli says,

dobbiamo principalmente prender di mira quella passione o vizio che più ci predomina, risoluti di espugnarla con tutte le forze del nostro spirito. Contro questa passione o vizio, seguita a dire Cassiano, come contro nostro principale nemico, hanno da essere indirizzati tutti i nostri dardi, cioè tutte le nostre meditazioni, i nostri propositi, le nostre preghiere, i nostri digiuni, le nostre lagrime, e tutti i nostri sforzi, affin di abatterlo, di vincerlo e di espugnarlo. Or tutto questo altro non è che l'esame particolare di cui abbiamo ora a ragionare; giacchè questo consiste appunto in indagare, qual è quella passione, che più ci trasporta, o quel difetto, in cui più frequentemente cadiamo, e poi pigliarlo di mira per estirparlo con esami speciali e con particolari industrie.²⁰⁸

While insisting that the most predominant passion should be the subject matter of such examen, Scaramelli points out that this choice must be made in consultation with one's spiritual guide.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Ibid., pp. 222-223.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 218-219.

²⁰⁹ Scaramelli is very clear about the role of spiritual guide, as we have seen, in the choice of penance as well as in selection of the subject matter. In the practical hints meant for directors he says, “se vedrà il direttore che alcuno dei suoi discepoli s'innamori della bella virtù della modestia e divenga vago di conseguirla, gli proponga come mezzo forse il più efficace di ogni altro per acquistarla, l'esame particolare di cui

Scaramelli believes that the particular examen is especially suited to person who are being freed from bonds of grievous sin and are aspiring for perfection. The choice of subject matter, again, is important to ensure good results in such exercises as Scaramelli explains:

*l'esame particolare potrà consigliarsi a persone, che, sciolte da' legami dei peccati gravi, cominciano ad aspirare alla perfezione; giacchè questo è un mezzo molto efficace per ottenerla. Si prenda pertanto la cura il direttore di assegnar loro la materia su cui dovranno farlo. Osservi nei rendimenti di conto che il suo discepolo gli farà della propria coscienza, qual è quella passione che più lo domina; qual è quel difetto in cui cade più spesso ed è di maggior impedimento ai progressi del di lui spirito; e faccia, che applichi a quello il suo esame particolare, insegnandoli prima il modo di farlo.*²¹⁰

As we have already noted, Scaramelli underlines the importance of dealing with the vices one by one; when we have overcome one vice, we should move on to another just as we reach the top of a high tower climbing step by step.²¹¹ Citing some examples of philosophers who use this means in order to amend their lives,²¹² Scaramelli insists that particular examen can help curb our passions, uproot vices as well as implant within us the Christian perfection.

parlammo nel precedente trattato. Ma però l'istruisca che prenda a sterpare con questo esame un difetto per volta. Un capitano che voglia conquistare un regno, non attacca già la battaglia in tutte le parti, nè pretende già di espugnarlo tutto in una volta colle sue armi." Ibid., p. 350. Here he talks about gradually progressing in the examen: subjecting all the movements of senses to the rule of reason – first eyes, then tongue, etc.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 219.

²¹¹ Scaramelli is borrowing this comparison is from John Chrysostom who said, "dappoichè avremo vinta una passione, o ci saremo emendati di qualche mancamento, prenderemo ad abbatte un altro e poi un altro; e così a poco a poco per mezzo di questa industria spirituale andremo salendo all'alto della perfezione. Alla cima di un'alta torre non si va per via d'ali, ma per via di scalini. Volendo alcuno ascendere a quella sommità sale il primo gradino della scala, e già comincia ad allontanarsi dalla terra, e ad avvicinarsi alla cima. Sale il secondo, il terzo, il quarto scalino; e più si discosta dalla profondità del piano, e più si approssima alla sublimità della cima. E quanto più sale, tanto più si dilunga dal basso, e tanto più s'accosta all'alto di quell'edificio. Così noi coll'industria di quello esame particolare rimuovendo in questo mese dalla nostr'anima un peccato, abbattendo in quest'altro mese una passione, sbarbicando dopo un mezz'anno qualche vizio, ci andiamo allontanando dal basso stato degli imperfetti, e ci andiamo accostando alle alte cime della perfezione. o accollando all'alte cime della perfezione. La similitudine non è mia, ma di S. Gio. Crisostomo, il quale ravvisa questi avanzamenti, che si vanno facendo nella perfezione per mezzo della emendazione de' vizi e dell'acquisto delle virtù, nella celebre scala di Giacobbe, per cui li andava al cielo; perchè anche noi con questi gradi di miglioramento andiamo ascendendo verso il Paradiso" Ibid., p. 219.

²¹² The author here cites the example of Plutarch who practiced a sort of examination to control his anger over a period of two-months. See *ibid.*

The practical part of the examen that Scaramelli outlines is just as Ignatius instructs in the *Spiritual Exercises*: in the morning making a firm purpose to avoid the fault; placing of the hand on the chest to remind oneself; taking note during the night examen; comparing the results weekly, and imposing mortification wherever necessary. Scaramelli insists on the efficacy of making the resolution in the morning as well as of the gesture of awareness because he believes that our spiritual progress is in proportion to our good purpose.²¹³ At the night examen Scaramelli proposes a special act of contrition for the failings under the particular subject matter, distinct from the fourth point of the examen. During this examen the faults are to be noted down in a book set aside for this, using the lines corresponding to each day.²¹⁴ With regard to the comparison of results, Scaramelli thinks that after a few weeks have passed we should examine the book where it was noted and for whatever progress made, we have to thank God and employ additional means when no progress was made.

Se troverà di aver fatto profitto, ne renda grazie a Dio, prenda animo e procuri con maggiore sforzo la totale e perfetta emendazione. Se poi non troverà alcun miglioramento, e forse troverà qualche deterioramento, pensi a mettere nuovi mezzi, per esempio di stare più sopra se stesso; di ricorrere a Dio con più frequenti preghiere di adoperare qualche penitenza corporale, a fine di muovere il cuore di Dio a concedergli aiuti più forti e più efficaci che vincano la propria debolezza, ed altre cose simili.²¹⁵

²¹³ Scaramelli here borrows the words of Thomas Kempis who prescribed that the purpose must be earnestly renewed in time of meditation: “i nostri avvanzamenti nello spirito vanno a proporzione de nostri proponimenti.” Scaramelli also narrates, this time citing St. John Climacus, how laying of hand on the heart as well as noting down the fault on a note book was a custom in monasteries. “Quello è un ottimo trafficante spirituale, ch’ogni sera fa i suoi conti del guadagno o del danno che da tutta la giornata gli è risultato, il che non può risapersi con esattezza se ad ogni ora no si noti il lucro o lo scapito che nel traffico dello spirito va succedendo. Alcuni vi sono che per maggiore comodità e speditezza segnano in una coroncina che portano nascostamente seco, i mancamenti in cui cadono. Così riesce loro, senza che altri se ne avvedano, di farne memoria particolare, e di averne appresso di sè in esatto conto.” Ibid.

²¹⁴ Scaramelli, following the model proposed by Ignatius, believes the lines should shorten each day, as there would be improvement. “S. Ignacio da il modo, con cui devono farsi tali note. Dice, che si stendano in una carta alcune linee ineguali, una più lunga dell’altra. Nelle linee più lunghe si segnino i mancamenti dei primi giorni, nelle più corte dei giorni seguenti; perchè si supone che la persona si vade emendando, onde scemino ogni giorno più le cadute.” Ibid., pp. 220-221.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 221.

Scaramelli is of the opinion that every notable transgression should be accompanied by imposition of mortification; for, in correction of particular vices, mortification acts as an efficacious tool.²¹⁶

9.2 Observations

Right at the outset Scaramelli had made it very clear the type of examen he has in mind – the examination as a secret confession between God and humans. The sacramental confession is differentiated by the act of confessing at the feet of a priest; the one made in solitude in front of God is confession all the same. The major reasons given for making an examination, the vocabulary used throughout as well as the imageries employed clearly show that Scaramelli has a moralistic view of this exercise. This is clearly seen when Scaramelli says that the examination is the most powerful tool to purify oneself from all sins in order to achieve perfection.

The comparisons of the human soul with a ship that is under constant attack in the sea, a garden that is full of weeds, and so on point to the fact that sins are always around and one has to rely on a thorough examination be it to remove sins or to cleanse the weeds regularly. As we have seen, Scaramelli proposes a diligent and thorough examination with the purpose to remove not only the grievous sins but even the minor ones. With regard to the type of language that is employed by Scaramelli, he refers to setting up of a tribunal, of judging oneself, and so on. For him, rectifying the damage done throughout the day is made possible in the examination that one undertakes at the end of the day. When he talks about the examen as a way to fight the evil by pruning away the new shoots of sins, of daily purifying of the venial and other sins Scaramelli leaves no room for doubt that the entire focus of this exercise of perfection is removal of vices and growth of virtues. Among the

²¹⁶ In the practical suggestions that Scaramelli make, imposing of mortification and penance belong to the spiritual director. He opines that the director should demand the penitent to give account of the progress made in the matter of the particular examen: “Si faccia render conto il direttore del profitto che il suo penitente fa circa la materia del suo esame speciale. Egli stesso gli assegni le mortificazioni, e pinitenze che deve fare per le mancanze in cui cade: gli suggerisca i mezzi per vincersi più generosamente. Se poi trovasse notevole deterioramento e trascuratezza, potrebbe qualche volta in pena di simili negligenze privarlo della santa comunione; intendo s’egli abbia virtù di sopportare questa mortificazione con umiltà e con pace.” *Ibid.*, p. 223.

reasons for making an examination, other than the weak human nature, Scaramelli points out that such an exercise will help avoid severe judgement; making confession, either during the examen or outside of it, lead people to greater perfection.²¹⁷

Other than the first section of the *Direttorio*, wherever the practice of examination of conscience is dealt with, even if passingly, it becomes clear that the focus is on moral correctness.²¹⁸ From all these we conclude that, in spite of the allusion to spiritual discernment, Scaramelli proposes a moralistic examination of conscience.

10 Conclusion

Lallemant, Surin and Caussade can be talked of in the same breath for one reason: they are all mystics who talk about simplicity, self-surrender, annihilation, and they propagated apophatic prayer. We have just seen in our analysis that these three masters of mystical prayer visualize a discerning type of examen, and it is no mere coincidence. The *Spiritual Exercises* offer a school of discernment of spirits and talk of contemplatives in action; and we see clearly the emphasis of these authors on the primacy of contemplation. The mystic trio under our consideration bases on and draws from the *Spiritual Exercises* but not with the same intensity; Lallemant moves around the Meditation on Two Standard, of choosing between serving either between the standard of Christ or that of Satan while he also talks of humility as inner disposition to serve God; Surin talked about getting away

²¹⁷ The language that Scaramelli uses to describe the examen is similar to the one that he employs to describe the sacramental confession. Frequent sacramental confession is one of the ways to speedily attain perfection and the examination is another way to reach such perfection and these two, for Scaramelli, are closely linked, confirming further the moralistic nature of examination of conscience. See Article VIII on Confession in *ibid.*, pp. 179ff.

²¹⁸ In the article on Means to Attain Virtue Scaramelli talks of the examen as 1) a means to acquire prudence: there are four ways namely praying for this gift, by mortifying the passions, by seeking advice from others and by self-examination. 2) As a means to acquire justice: justice is acquired in two ways, by preserving the heart from covetousness and by rigorous self-examination on the faults committed against justice and carefully avoiding it. Cf. Giovanni Battista Scaramelli, *Direttorio ascetico* vol. II, Torino: Giacinto Marietti, 1879, pp. 23ff; 41ff. In the Italian work there is only mention of the means, whereas the English translation gives the four ways for prudence and two ways for justice respectively. This break up is given in the ‘Skeleton of Sermon,’ the translators believe it is also the work of Scaramelli, though it does not appear in original Italian but only in French edition. Cf. John Baptist Scaramelli, *Directorium Asceticum* vol. III, Dublin: William B. Kelly, 1870, pp. 27, 57 and John Baptist Scaramelli, *Directorium Asceticum* vol. IV, Dublin: William B. Kelly, 1871, pp. 306, 307, 324.

from attachments and discerning the movements to choose God's will; Caussade focuses on union with God, of discovering the will of God not through activism but by self-abandonment to Divine Providence. Though all of them talk about purification and self-surrender, they do not always embark upon similar paths and this would be because they developed their spiritual principles in interaction with other spiritualities.

It is a well-known fact that Lallemand was influenced by Pierre de Bérulle, one of the central figures of French school of spirituality. Another important figure of this era, Francis de Sales, left a deep impact especially through his writings *Introduction to the Devout Life* and *Treatise on the Love of God*. Surin, we have already noted, was directly influenced by Lallemand. But what is more significant is his association with Carmelites and the subsequent fusion with their spirituality; he has indeed drawn from other mystics like Theresa of Avila and John of the Cross.²¹⁹ Similarly, we have already noted that Caussade was influenced by Madame Guyon, Francis de Sales, Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet.

Quite differently, we have the example – though from the same era, from a similar spiritual climate – in Crasset who saw the examen as an ascetical tool. Like his compatriots, Crasset too developed his teachings in Ignatian and Berulian culture and yet his outlook has been in stark contrast to the mystics. Through his emphasis on good behaviour and removal of attachments Crasset made it clear that for him the examen was a tool for all sort of people, irrespective of their prayer experience. This seems to point to the fact that the examen was not understood only as a discerning exercise and that the moralistic approach was not completely alien in this era of French spiritual culture.

The difference in approach gets sharper in the case of Scaramelli who advocated the examen as a secret confession between a soul and God. It is true that his background is not the seventeenth century French mystical culture, yet his concern is, just like these French Jesuits, perfection in spiritual life. We have clearly seen that Scaramelli is in dialogue with the spiritual climate around him in Italy and the *Direttorio* builds on the long tradition of spiritual master who taught the importance of the examen. The main concern

²¹⁹ See Faesen, "The Seventeenth Century," pp. 268-270.

of Scaramelli, we have seen, is the purity of heart and the daily examen is the best means to cleanse the soul on a daily basis. This again underlines our affirmation that there were multiple interpretations of this daily prayer. The fact that this work was composed in vernacular Italian and not in Latin as was the custom, also stands out.

Having looked at the way the examen was understood in the 17th century, the logical sequence would be to have a glance at the next century. However, there is a sort of vacuum/gap owing to the suppression Society of Jesus towards the end of 18th century when there was near-extinction of the Ignatian tradition. Even after the subsequent restoration of the Jesuits, there were hardly any new lines of interpretations, as the concern clearly was to get back on their feet. Keeping this in mind, we turn our attention to the official documents of the Society of Jesus, with the same objective of tracing story of the examen, and this we shall do it in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

The Examen in the Documents of the Society of Jesus

1 Introduction

The Society of Jesus as a Religious Order in the Catholic Church lives the particular charism of Ignatius of Loyola and this Ignatian spirituality is a common heritage of the universal Church. Yet the way Jesuits live out of this spiritual resource is different from other individuals or groups of people who live the same, and therefore the documents of the Society of Jesus would throw light upon the ways in which Jesuits as an apostolic body live the Ignatian charism. In the preceding chapters we have studied individual authors who dealt with the examen practice in different contexts and we have identified different approaches. In this chapter we would like to analyse some of the official documents of the Society of Jesus with a view to capture the major orientations with regard to the daily examen.

In this chapter we will take up documents of the Society of Jesus spanning more than 450 years – sifting through documents such as Rules of the Society composed even before the *Constitutions*, the ultimate governing body, the General Congregations, official letters written by the Superior Generals to the universal body of Jesuits, and so on. Our concern will be to closely study the manner in which the Society of Jesus officially approached this spiritual exercise that Ignatius and other Jesuits held in high esteem.

2 Rules of the Society of Jesus (*Regulae Societatis Iesu*)

We know that in the Society of Jesus the *Constitutions* provide a framework for common life and they are adapted and complementary norms are added as and when required. While drafting the *Constitutions* Ignatius foresaw that there would be ordinances and rules that would have to be adapted according to the circumstances, though there has to be uniformity among them [136]. Other than being “local and particular” these rules also have a larger outreach. Right from the beginning there existed such rules and especially in the early years when the *Constitutions* were being not yet promulgated. The *Monumenta* puts together such a collection under *Regulae* that has 108 documents spanning from 1540 to 1556.¹ These rules have been in vigour in various parts of the world and they form certain “way of proceeding” in the early years. In the absence of the Constitution, it was “un vehículo privilegiado de implantación real de las Constituciones en la vida de la CJ, antes ya de que fueran formalmente aprobadas y promulgadas. El conjunto de esos documentos iniciales presenta un cuadro formal de las r. cuyos elementos o piezas son: un ‘Sumario de las Constituciones’ para la vida espiritual de los jesuitas.”² These documents spell out the manner of living that was expected of the religious in those times and they are part of the spiritual heritage of the Society of Jesus.³ Therefore, we think that they could provide us

¹ The *MHSI* groups these documents under five major headings and they are *Regulae Conimbricenses*, *Regulae S. Ignatii*, *Regulae Romanae anni 1549*, *Regulae in Hispania et Lusitania a P. Nadal annis 1553-1554 Promulgatae* and *Regulae Romanae Varie*.

² Urbano Valero, “Reglas de la compañía,” in *DEI*, pp. 1546-1550, here 1547.

³ “Los textos antiguos de las r. abolidas conservan el valor de testimonio histórico del patrimonio espiritual de la Compañía.” See *ibid.*, p. 1550.

with clues to understand the course of the daily examen. We analyse here some of such documents that deal with the examen.

2.1 Doc. 23: *Regula Generalis* (1541)

This document is one of the first that spells out the rules of a Jesuit community and among them the examen has an important role. The rule states that everyone is to do the examen for a quarter of an hour before coming for meal.

17. todos os que estudarem virao á primeira meza, se nao lhes for madado outra cousa; e os que se acharem bem, nao se asentarao na meza dos enfermos, nemo s enfermos na mezs dos saos; e is qye ouverem de comer nesta meza o dirao primeiro ao mestre de casa pera o dar por rol a quem o ouver de prover.

18. Antes de jantar, por hum quarto d’ora, e antes de cea por mea hora, ouvida a campa, todos se recolhao a fazer seus exames, segundo os pontos que pera isso tem. E acabando de jantar e caer, por espaço de mea hora, por evitae palavaras superflujas e ouciosas, nao comunicarao huns com os outros.

19. Nao tomarao nenhuma cousa de casa pera seu proprio uso; mas, tendo necessidade, o dirao ao reitor pera que o proveja.⁴

This is another document that spells out the rules of the house. Among the many practical rules of the houses like “nobody takes the books of others, no letters to be send outside without the permission of the rector, etc.” the practice of examen is also given. It recommends everyone to do the examen for quarter of an hour before one comes for the meal. Here the examen is given as a means to check if one uses superfluous words, etc. and the focus of such examination is moralistic in nature.

2.2 Doc. 24: *Examen Generale Conscientiae* (ca. 1541)

Another of the earliest document that records the practice of the examen in the Society of Jesus and this is dedicated exclusively to the general examination of conscience. It spells out the steps of the examen in the following way:

[1]. Porque os corpos depois de comer e beber estao mais aparelhados pera rir e folgar que em outro algum tempo (como diz a Scriptura: ‘sedit pouplus mesus comedere et

⁴ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 23, p. 74.

bibere et surrexit ludere' etc.), logo depois de jantar e caer cada hum se apartará per huma mea hora, na qual, por evitar palabras ociosas e superfluas e por otros respeitois, nom comonicarao huns con outors; e antes de jantar per hum 4^a de hora, e antes de cea por mea hora, farao por interiormente sentí as cousas seguintes.

[2]. Traraa á memoria as mereces e graças que Nosso Senhor lhe tem feito e faz, e emquanto mal e peccados tem gastado seus annos. E, asi com el-rey Ezechias trabalhe por sentir e chorar sua vida pasada, dizendo: “recogitabo tibi omnes annos meos in amaretudine animae meae” etc. E, se quieser mais alargar-se, siga todo o psalmo.

[3]. Olhara se do exame passado até o presente offendeo a Deus ou ao próximo em algum mau pensamento palavra ou obra. A Deus, esquecendo-sse delle, non o amando e trazendo sempre diante dos olhos, e no coração, memoria e votade como devera. Ao próximo, falando ou pensando mal delle ou lhe dando algum mau exemplo. E cuidará asi mesmo se foi frio em gastar mal o dia, e se deixou de fazer alguma boa ora por tentação ou pigriça; e olharaá que aproveite mais hum daí que outo; e dirá hum psalmo dos penitenciaes ou Pater noster e Ave Maria, rogando ao Senhor lhe dee forças pera nom cair mais em as taes faltas e culpas.⁵

This instructs each one to examen the entire day in order to find out one's faults and sins and then to correct and amend them. This is moralistic in nature as the focus is on the faults, the mistakes done and the missed opportunities.

2.3 Doc. 27: *Regulae His qui Extra Studia Iuvandis Proximis Versantur*

This document has its origin in Portugal and it records the rules that were meant for Jesuit students and the instructions were aimed at promoting greater care of others.

Regras pera os que andarem fora dos estudos exercitando sua vocação; a qual, como quer que seja trabalhar por ajudar a salvar o próximo, a primeira será a seguinte: [...] 3^a. Os confessores cada dia antes de jantar duas horas o menos, e tres a horas de vesporas, estarao na igreja que elegerem pera ouvirem de penitencia os que se quiserem confesar, salvo, se o superior mandar que os vao buscar ou confessar a casa, ou outra cousa detreminar por algum justo respeyto. [...] 9. Nao se prometerao sem licença confissies em dias de festa e tempos honde soem muytos confesar-se. 10. Quando nao poderem confessar alguma pessoa, escusar-se-ao com muyta mansidao, mostrando ter pesar de nao lhe poder satisfacer, e buscando rezoes por honde a tal pessoa nao fique descontente. 11. O superior será muy reguroso em ir a moesteyros de freiras e em dar licença pera as confessarem ou conversarem; mas leyxarao o cuydadi dellas a seus superiores, porque elles de mais tempo sabem o que aos moesteyros melhor convem. 12. Farao cada dia o exame particular que fazem os estudantes.⁶

⁵ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 24, pp. 80-83.

⁶ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 27, pp. 117-118.

This document instructs that the examination of conscience should be done every day. Among the many rules spelt out for the students, confession and examen have an important place.

2.4 Doc. 43: *Scholasticis Externis Servandos* (ca. 1548)

This document,⁷ probably of 1548 prepared for external students of Jesuit colleges talks of the examen in the following way:

[...] [3] Singulis mensibus omnes confiteantur; et si qui sint devoti, communicent, de consilio tamen confessoris. [4] Ómnibus diebus dominicis et etiam festivis audiant concionem. [5] Singuli praeceptores ante inchoationem lectionis orent et inducant omnes ut simul orent: in classibus ùerorum, etiam publice ut respondeant pueri; vesperi idem faciant, ubi dimittuntur scholares. [6] Doceantur omnes scholares examen generale, et ut quotidie illud faciant, exhortentur: curetur ut omnes sciant doctrinam christianam et modum confitendi. [7] ut saltem quottidie nis mentaliter orent *vel vocaliter*, ubi surgunt et ubi eunt cubitum.⁸

These rules were meant for students who do not reside in the college and so they are to practice certain amount of spiritual activities to strengthen themselves. Other than attending the Eucharist daily and classes on Christian doctrine on Fridays, the examination of conscience is also prescribed as a means to grow in life of faith.

2.5 Doc. 45: *Regulae Ministri* (1548)

Proceeding from the group of Roman rules, this document provides us with the clue how the community life was being organized and what was expected of each office-holders. Among other duties of the minister of the house, the following practices are listed:

7. Ogni venerdi faccia una exortatione il che ha la cura de la casa a tutti gli inferiori o ad alcuni piu inquieti, o ver ad alcuno.

8. Exhorti a tutti che non saranno sacerdote, al orare quando se levaranno et andaranno a dormire.

⁷ *Regulae Circa Bonos Mores Scholasticis Externis Servandos*

⁸ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 43, p. 154.

9. Item nella sua exortatione mova agli altri per far examen particolare delle cose elle quale piu mancano.⁹

Among the many rules that are given, by this rule addressed to the minister of the house, it is intended that the general and particular examination will be made by all.

2.6 Doc. 51: *Regulae Visitoris Nocturni* (1549)

Another document that faithfully reports of the traditions of Roman houses:

No 6: Sonará la campana per andare a dormire come gli ordinará li ministri, et andando a sonar' smorzará li lumi delli corritori.

No. 7: Tutti sentendo la campana si prepararanno per andare a dormire, facendo oratione per meza hora, o lésamine della conscientia, como sonandose alle 4 hore et meza, per meza hora si recogeranno, di modo che alle cinque siano al letto.¹⁰

The detailed instruction about the amount of sleep that is needed and similar practices, the examen is also mentioned.

2.7 Doc. 62: *Constitutionis Collegiorum* (1549-1550)

A constitution for the colleges of the Society of Jesus was prepared under guidance of Polanco and this document clearly indicate what was expected of students. Among the spiritual instructions, the examen and way to pray find mention: “todos sean instruidos en el modo de examinar la conscientia y meditar y orar, los que han de estar en el colegio como estudiante de la Compañía, dando el Rector orden que hagan los exercitios espirituales, si no los han hecho.”¹¹ The students were expected to confess and receive communion every eight days.¹²

With regard to the daily examen this document prescribed:

⁹ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 45, p. 170-171.

¹⁰ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 51, p. 191.

¹¹ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 62, p. 219.

¹² Though they were expected to confess on Saturdays or Sundays, those who wished to confess twice a week were to get the permission from the Rector. See *ibid*.

sin el examen que se haze en la confesión sacramental, cada uno examine su conscientia una vez al día antes de yr a dormir al modo que se enseña en los exercitios; y cada mañana renueve sus propósitos de apartarse de sus familiares defectos, armándose de los remedios que le fueren contra ellos. Sí al Rector pareziere que debía hazer dos exámenes al día, uno después de comer, otro después de cenar, harálos.¹³

Thus, one of the important documents with regard to the colleges mentions the examen, general examen different from one before making confession. And the reference to renewal of resolution in the morning clearly indicates the particular examen.

2.8 Doc. 63: *Regulae Collegi Romani (1551)*

The rules for the Roman College of 1551 is an important document as this became a model for many other colleges of the Jesuits later years. It is true that Ignatius did not want all the colleges of the Society to have uniform schedule, nevertheless there were general instructions and regulations set out.¹⁴

2a Tutti sentiranno messa ogni giorno [...] et tutti sapiano rispondere, et servire, et si sforzino sentire la messa devotamente, non sedendo, ne apoggiati, ma inginocchione, o in piedi.¹⁵ [...] Tutti procurino d’haver la mente pura, et perciò usino ogni giorno esaminar due volte la sua conscientia, al modo consueto qui in casa, et fra il di habbino regolarmente una hora, per darsi all’oratione, nella quale potranno dir’ l’ufficio della Madonna, et alter oration secondo la devotione d’ogniuno o il parere del Rectore, cui discretione se altro convenessi a qualche particolare preveda ad ogni uno di quello li conviene.¹⁶

Tutti procurino di havere internamente et mostrare di fora nel volto... oltre la satisfattione della propria conscientia; et per questo effetto sara un sindaco fra loro, il quale notara li deffetti.¹⁷

This rule came into effect from 1551 before which the policy of examen was once a day, as we see in the previous document.¹⁸ Here the rule clearly spells out two examens, one at noon and the other at night before going to bed, mentioned as “according to the custom of

¹³ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 62, pp. 220-221.

¹⁴ See also Pedro Leturia, “La hora matutina de meditación en la Compañía naciente [1540-1590]” in *Estudios Ignacianos II*, BIHSI, p. 196.

¹⁵ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 63, p. 250.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

¹⁸ Cf. Note 55 above. See also Leturia, “La hora matutina,” p. 197.

the house.” And the examen that is expected of each member of the college is moralistic in nature.

2.9 Doc. 67: *Regulae Communes* (1551)

Another document that has Roman context prescribes the examen in this way: “tutti diano all’esame quotidiano, oratione, meditatione, et lettione il tempo que gli sara ordinato con ogni diligenza et divotione nel Signor Nostro.”¹⁹ This rule talks of the daily examination practiced as a means to perfect oneself. Daily Eucharist and classes on Christian doctrine were also part of the schedule.

2.10 Doc. 69: *Regulae Collegii Germanici* (1552)

The rule specific for the German College prescribes daily Mass and the examen as part of their daily schedule.

Missam quotidie in loco itidem praescripto devote audiant ac faestis et diebus [Dominicis] concionibus ac lectionibus sacris intersint. Nec non et semel saltem singulis menosibus confiteantur atque communicant, ut a Rector fuerit ordinatum.

Mane postquam serrexerint, et vesperi antequam cubent, orationi atque examine conscientiae, iuxta methodum praescriptam, vacent per horae dimidium, duobud tintinabuli signis distinguendum.²⁰

As we shall notice, this schedule is just like in other Jesuit colleges and we can be sure of the influence of the rules for the Roman College that we have already seen.

2.11 Doc 71: *Summarium Constitutionum* (1553-1554)

This document has his origin in Nadal who was given the responsibility to promulgate the Constitutions. Among the many other observances, we can find the mention of the examen.

¹⁹ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 67, p. 286.

²⁰ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 69, p. 307.

[35] Usen examinar cada día sus conscientias.

[36] Sea uno el confessor de todos, dado de mano del que tiene cargo; y si esto no puede, tenga cada uno a lo menos su confesor firme, a quien tenga su conscientia descubierta.²¹

As the Constitutions were not yet officially approved the *Summario* had great role to play.²²

2.12 Doc. 74: *Officium Ministri* (1553-1554)

Similar to the document we have seen above (Doc. 45), this rule for the minister, here from the Hispanic context signals out the examen as follows:

8. Enseñe el examen particular y quotidiano, y exhórtelos a practicarlo, y hazer oración por la mañana y a la tarde, y entre día levantar la mente a Dios y hazer toda cosa por amor suyo; y esto haga por sí o por el confessor.

12. tenga cuidado que se haga el examen que de medio en medio año se debe hazer, como se suele en los que stan en probación, y de la confesión general y del manifestar la consciencia u de los votos a su tiempo; y acordándolo al superior, seguirá aquello que le será ordenando.²³

This again shows the great concern Jesuit houses had about the practice of the examen.

2.13 Doc. 77: *De magistro noviciorum* (1553-1554)

These rules pertain to a period when the formation of those who joined the Society of Jesus was being coordinated and certain uniformity was brought.

[...] de officio eius circa conservandos et promovendos eos qui domi sunt.

1. doceat quomodo debent integre et diligenter (scribere etiam, si oportuerit, peccata) confiteri, et supleat sua interrogatione, si ipsi nesciant; et ut id faciant omnes saltem octavo quoque die, et crebrius nonnulli, si expedire videbitur (nisi aliqui particularibus de causis mittendi viderentur), et observet quae confessores debent observare, et omnino ut quieta cum conscientia vivant omnes curet, ad quod si opus fuerit ut confessionem generalem instituat, eam proponat eis.

²¹ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 71, p. 327.

²² Cf. Valero, "Reglas," pp. 1546ff.

²³ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 74, p. 368.

2. doceat examen particulare contra aliquos defectus precipuos, prout ipse in confessionibus viderit expedire, admovere; iubeat alia etiam remedia asperiora, si morbus egerit.
3. doceat etiam examen gnerale quotidie faciendum, nec ullo modo cum conscientia peccati mortales dormiendum, minus unquam communicandum.
4. doceat remedia contra tentationum oppugnationes, et cum tentatum aliquem intelliget, praesto sit ei, et blande et prudenter cum eo agendo, ne superetur curet; consulto etiam superiore, si gravior vidaetur esse tentatio.²⁴

This document captures the guidelines for masters of novices and the examen is aimed at perfection in all they do. The concern is that no one would go to bed with sin still in them and so we can say here the reference is to a moralistic examen.

2.14 Doc. 97: *Orationis Ordo* (1553-1554)

Another document of Hispanic origin talks of the examen in the following way:

El meditar, y orar del escolar, ultra del ordinario, que es la missa y la quotidiana oración en el tiempo que para ella se le dará, examen, confesión, y comunión, podrá ser a la actuación del fin de sus estudios, que es el de la Compañía, y exercicio de la obediencia [...]. Y ansí, por ordinario, el tiempo de la oración será una hora ultra de oír la missa; y en ella dividida se han de hazer dos vezes examen brevemente, y el resto ocuparse en su meditación o oración vocal, como mejor pudieren [...].

After prosing such an order with regard to the type of prayer, the document also sheds light on the length of prayer.

Aunque la ordinaria oración, como se ha dicho, aya de ser una hora cada día ultra de la missa, para los estudiantes tamen podráse tener una hora a la mañana de oración, o cerca della, y dos exámenes, uno antes de comer, y otro antes de ir a la cama, con una breve recolecion y preparación para ir a dormir; en modo que entre todo, por ahora, no se exceda una hora y media; y poco a poco se vaya acomodando al modo dicho. A los de la probación será necesaria más oración; la qual será a lo menos una hora integra por la mañana, su missa y examen antes de comer, otro examen antes de cena, y media hora antes de irse acostar; en modo que tengan determinadas dos horas para la oración, ultra del exercicio y meditación en la doctrina cristiana, en obediencia y mortificación, y humildad y platica de toda perfección de virtudes.²⁵

²⁴ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 77, pp. 394-395.

²⁵ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 97, pp. 488-489.

In this document on prayer in general reference is made to the examen as part of the daily prayer schedule. It is to noted that here two examen are recommended.

2.15 Doc. 98 A, B, C: *Regulae Scholarum Externarum* (1554)

We have yet another document of 1554 that talks of the way spiritual life is to be maintained in Jesuit colleges: “a todos se enseñe el examen quotidiano y el modo de hazer oración según la capacidad de cada uno.”²⁶ All were expected to attend the Eucharist and confess one a month.

2.16 Doc. 107: *Sti. Ignatii Ordinationes Varie* (ca. 1555)

Similar to the documents we have just analized, the present one brings together practices that were part of the life of early Jesuit colleges.

Recuerdos de cosas que diversas vezes se han de practicar.

3^a Del examen de conscientia.

Quello ch’ha cura de fare l’essortatione ogni venerdi, adverta ch’un venerdi faccia la tal essortatione, et altro examini quelli che lo ascoltano, uno ad uno, como fanno esaminare sua conscientia; et questo espenda il tempo che suole espendersi in nell’essortatione.²⁷

This document was prepared by Polanco, drawing from other existing sources.

2.17 Observations

The Rules of the Society of Jesus as a collection of documents related to the spiritual practices in and around Jesuit communitites open a new horizon, i.e. they shed light on the gradual adaptation and development of this practice. In the initial four to five years of the Society there was no fixed schedule for the examen nor a bell to remind the community of it: “al tempo del P. Ignacio non si sonava ne al levarsei ne all’oratione, en al sesame; ma quando era tempo di levarsi, andava [lo] svegliatore per camera e cosi gli svegliava. Poi

²⁶ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 98 A, p. 498.

²⁷ *MI*, vol. IV, Doc. 107, p. 583.

ognuno da se faceva la sua oration et sesame quando era tempo.”²⁸ Gradually, along with the foundation of the Colleges, around the years 1542-1544, there appears more instructions on how to organize community life.²⁹ In Rome, around the years 1547-1549 there already came into existence some fixed timing for examen, with the ringing of the bell, as proves the instructions for the minister.³⁰

Having analysed these documents, we can conclude that the daily examen became an integral part of the daily life of Jesuits not only in Rome, but all over. Though there were often differences of opinion on the duration of prayer in various communities in Spain, Portugal, etc.³¹, we see that the importance of the examen was largely accepted. Be it in the Colleges of the Society or in communities the examen had a major role in the spiritual life. The particular examen was employed by Ignatius to help people overcome some specific aspect of their life that needed correction. As it is clear from the analysis, the examen that is presented in these rules are overwhelmingly moralistic in nature.

3 The *Ratio Studiorum* and the Examen

The *Ratio Studiorum*, “The Plan and Methodology of Jesuit Education,” was the guiding pedagogical document,³² with much success throughout the world, for centuries. Though the definite version of the Ratio was approved in 1599, it had been in use for many years prior to this and in many versions. It was during the period of Aquaviva that the renowned *Ratio Studiorum* was given its final shape and what interests us here is the role of the examen in this document. The *Ratio* was born out of the need to have clear vision in the training of the new recruits into the Society of Jesus and later this was extended to all the educational institutions of the Society. The *Ratio Studiorum* has a two-fold ancestry: on one side the many rules for various functions in the Society of Jesus and on the other the

²⁸ *MI*, Scripta I, 561.

²⁹ Cf. Leturia, “La hora matutina,” p. 196, specially note 35, 36.

³⁰ Cf. Doc. 74 and Doc. 45 above.

³¹ See Leturia, “La hora matutina” for a detailed account of this issue in the early years of the Society.

³² For a detailed discussion on the importance of this document see Vincent J. Duminuco (ed.), *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2000.

individual colleges had made their own statutes and regulations.³³ Over the years the Society came out with four *Ratios* before the final one of 1599: the first, the so-called *Ratio Borgiana*, then the *Ratio* of 1586, a revised version in 1591 and the definite one of 1599.³⁴

Ever since the first College in Messina was founded in 1548, there was dispute over if it was permissible for the Society of Jesus to own colleges in accordance with its *Constitutions*, and the sixth GC settled this once for all through the following declaration:

not only colleges where there are scholasticates of the kind referred to but also others wherein the study of letters is pursued and classes conducted for the benefit of our neighbors are compatible with our Constitutions and institute. Those professed and formed coadjutors (about whom there might have been more doubt, since there can be none about the others) who are resident in colleges of this sort as necessary or even as only useful workers in the vineyard can be supported in them without scruple. Nor does this mean that the professed Society is assisted by the revenues of the colleges, something forbidden in the case of professed houses. However, care must by all means be taken to bring to completion colleges already begun. In them either some of our scholastics may be sustained or, if this proves more convenient to the Society, Ours may be maintained in other seminaries of one sort or other with funds from them, or in any other way that might be found according as seems to be of advantage to the service of God, the needs of the Society, and the common good of the Church in the judgment of Revered Father General.³⁵

However, the *Ratio* was already in existence and the principles were in practice and we see that this document prescribed the examen for all who were part of any of the educational institutions of the Society of Jesus.

The *Ratio* recommended prayer and examen as part of the curriculum or all as we see clearly under the title ‘common rules for the teachers of lower classes.’ It expected the teachers to be of great virtue and wanted them to train pupils well by saying, “the teacher shall so train the youths entrusted to the Society’s care that they may acquire not only learning but also habits of conduct worthy of a Christian. He should endeavor both in the classroom and outside to train the impressionable minds of his pupils in the loving service

³³ See John W. Padberg, “Development of the Ratio Studiorum,” in Duminuco, *The Jesuit Ratio*, p. 81. We have just analysed the rules and guidelines of various colleges that have shaped the *Ratio*.

³⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁵ GC6/D18. For the decrees of GCs 1-30 we have made use the version of Padberg, *For Matters*. In this section we will indicate only the GC and the decree number.

of God and in all the virtues required for this service.”³⁶ It also recommended prayer at the beginning of classes as well as attending sermons, all aimed at the overall growth of students in Christian doctrine.³⁷

Here, along with the frequent reception of sacraments, the examen is prescribed as follows:

likewise on Friday or Saturday the teacher shall give a homily or explain some point of Christian doctrine for half an hour. He should especially urge his pupils to say their daily prayers and in particular the rosary or the little office of the Blessed Virgin, to examine their consciences every evening, frequently and devoutly to receive the sacraments of penance and the holy Eucharist, to avoid bad habits, to hate vice, and to cultivate the virtues befitting a Christian.³⁸

We know that the frequent reception of communion was a theme close to the heart of the Jesuits and the *Ratio* clearly advocated this in order to groom the students as good Christians. The *Ratio* also recommended monthly confession as part of such a formation. Among the responsibilities of the master, we find, “he should see to it that each boy goes to confession each month. The pupils should be told to hand to their confessor a slip of paper on which is written their name, surname, and class, so that by going over the slips later he will know who failed to go to confession. Let him frequently pray for his pupils and set before them the good example of his religious life.”³⁹ By outlining the minute details such as these, the *Ratio* further emphasised the role of confession in the formation of good Christians.

³⁶ *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum of 1599* (English translation with an Introduction and Explanatory notes by Allan P. Farrell), p. 62.

³⁷ “[...] 2. At the beginning of class let one of the pupils recite a brief but suitable prayer. This the teacher and pupils should follow attentively, kneeling with heads uncovered. Before the beginning of the lesson the teacher shall with uncovered head make the sign of the cross. 3. Let the teacher see to it that all are present at Mass every day and at the sermon on feast days. Besides, twice a week during Lent, he should either send them or, if such is the local custom, accompany them to the sermon. 4. Let Christian doctrine be learnt and recited from memory on Friday or Saturday, especially in the grammar classes and in the other classes also if it is thought necessary. There may be need in some places and for new pupils to have these lessons more frequently.” *The Jesuit Ratio*, p. 62. We can clearly see the similar practices of the Roman College, see Doc 63, 69 above.

³⁸ *The Jesuit Ratio*, p. 62.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

The *Ratio* thought out clear-cut rules for all section of students just as there were instructions for teachers of different sections. In the rules for scholastics of the Society, the *Ratio* outlined how their behaviour should be. Similarly, there were separate rules for students who were not residents of the institute, i.e. who are externs, and the *Ratio* visualized how they were to be formed:

1. Those who attend the schools of the Society of Jesus in pursuit of learning should be convinced that with God's help, we shall make as great effort to advance them in the love of God and all other virtues as we shall do to perfect them in the liberal arts.
2. Each student shall attend the class to which after examination he shall be assigned by the prefect of studies.
3. They shall go to confession at least once a month, assist at daily Mass at the time appointed, and be present in a becoming manner at the sermon on feast days.
4. They shall attend the weekly instructions in Christian doctrine and learn the lessons in the textbook assigned by the teacher.⁴⁰

Therefore, the concern of the *Ratio* was good foundation not only in intellectual but also in moral life, as the instructions reveal. Cultivation of good behaviour, with an eye on good reputation, keeping away from ill reputed places, etc.⁴¹ indicate the general orientation of such rules, and they are indicators of the type of examination of conscience that the *Ratio* expected the students to make.

Further, the regulations outlined for the externs also make it clear that the *Ratio* gave importance to good conduct and sincerity in observing the laws. For example,

- [...] 11. They should shun the company of those whose conduct is immoral or even questionable, and they should associate only with those whose example in studies and in conduct may help them.
12. They should refrain altogether from reading pernicious as well as worthless books.
13. They may not attend public spectacles, comedies, plays, or public executions of criminals. They must not take part in theatricals outside the school without obtaining permission of their teachers or the prefect of studies.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁴¹ The rules further read: "5. None of our students shall enter the school with weapons, daggers, knives, or anything else which may be forbidden by reason of place or circumstances. 6. Students must never indulge in swearing, ridicule, insult, detraction, falsehood or forbidden games. They must keep away from places of ill repute and from such as have been proscribed by the prefect. In short, they should not do anything that is contrary to good morals. 7. They should understand that the teachers may employ the corrector to punish them when in matters concerning discipline or studies, commands and warnings are of no avail. Those who refuse to accept the punishments or do not give promise of reform or are troublesome to others or set a bad example shall be expelled from school. 8. All must obey their teachers and must faithfully follow in class and at home the plan and method of study prescribed for them." *The Jesuit Ratio*, p. 63.

14. All should strive to preserve sincerity of soul and purity of conscience and be especially exacting in their observance of the divine law. They should frequently and sincerely commend themselves to God, to the Blessed Mother of God, to the other saints, and earnestly implore the protection of the angels, in particular of their guardian angel. They should behave well at all times and in all places, but especially in church and the classroom.

15. Finally, let them so conduct themselves in word and action that everyone may easily understand that they are no less earnest in acquiring virtue and integrity of life than in making progress in learning.⁴²

From these it is amply clear that the focus of the *Ratio* was a moralistic examination of conscience, aimed at cultivation of clear conscience and a virtuous life. Purity of conscience and exact observance of the law are clear indicators that the *Ratio* expected the students to be well formed Christians and the examination of conscience was geared to such a goal.

4 The *Directorios* and the Examen

The *Directorios de Ejercicios*, or simply the *Directorios*, is the collection of commentaries written by Jesuits on how to give the Exercises. These instructions deal with the selection and preparation of retreatants, the ways of adapting the *Exercises* to different situations and people, who can make the exercises profitably, what order must be followed in giving the Exercises and so on. Such practical instructions on giving the Exercises form what is called the Directory (*Directorios*), and since they are composed by many of the early Jesuits who been close collaborators of Ignatius, they are much close to the mind of Ignatius himself – they are the closest possible commentaries.⁴³ This can be seen from the fact that directories were written by Jesuits who knew well the spirit of Ignatius. And the directories begin to appear once there was a felt need to have clarity in the manner of giving the Exercises, especially the years after the death of Ignatius. What immediately calls

⁴² Ibid., p. 102.

⁴³ Scholars are of the opinion that since they are written by collaborators and companions of Ignatius the Directory is the best original source to understand the Exercises. See the introductory comments in Miguel Lop Sebastián, *Los directorios de los ejercicios 1540-1599*, Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 2000, p. 15. See also Martin E. Palmer (trans. & ed.), *On Giving the Spiritual Exercises: The Early Jesuit Manuscript Directories and the Official Directory of 1599*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996.

attention is also the fact that there are many directories and multiple ways of looking at the *Exercises*.

As such, Ignatius himself is the first author of the directory, as he explains, through the annotations, the way to give the Exercises.⁴⁴ There are also instructions and guidelines that originate in Ignatius and are included in the *Directorios*, through his companions (D. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6). Then there are directories written by Jesuits who were guided in the Exercises by Ignatius himself (directory of Nadal (D. 7), of Canisio (D. 8), of Doménech (D. 13, 14) and so on).⁴⁵ Another category of directories would be the official ones, i.e. directories that are the result of coordinated efforts.⁴⁶ Yet another group of directories would be the ones composed by renowned directors of the Exercises.⁴⁷ Thus, the directories as a collection of documents on how to give the Exercises while enjoying authority, enjoy internal plurality.

Our concern here is to study different *directorios* to analyse how each one treats the examen and what importance is given to this spiritual practice right at the conception. The fact that the *Directorio* has a history of almost 40 years from Ignatius till the official directory was approved in 1599, make it a document of interest. The importance of this document lies in the fact that it is not a mere collection of commentaries by Jesuits but in the fact that most of the comments are incorporated in the official document later and it became an official document of the Society of Jesus, with the edition of 1599. A detailed study of the *Directorios* offers ample evidence of a wide variety of practices with regard to the daily examen.

⁴⁴ See Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 15.

⁴⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴⁶ Mercurian made the first attempt to have an official directory, though Borja had appointed a commission comprising of Diego Miró, Juan Polanco, and Alfonso Ruiz. Though much was achieved, it was Aquaviva who brought out the official Directory in 1599. Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁷ Though the official directory meant a conclusion to the process of forming such document, there were more directories by Gagliardi (D. 46) and by Juan B. Ceccoti (D. 47, 48).

4.1 The *Ejercicios leves*

The first aspect that calls our attention in the *Directorios* is recommendation of the examen as ejercicio leve. For example, D. 4 recommends:

los que no tienen estas disposiciones, ni se espera que con facilidad se podrán traer a equilibrio en sus cosas, o son casados o religiosos o inhábiles, no se les han de dar los Ejercicios, en especial cuando hubiese otros a quien los dar, u otras legítimas ocupaciones, pero déseles el ayuda competente como la Primera Semana, exhortándolos a que se recojan en alguna parte, lo más que pudieren, si no fuere cuando fueren a Misa, Vísperas, o vinieren a casa a tomar los Ejercicios. Puédeseles dar otra ayuda de algunos Ejercicios de las otras semanas, del modo de orar y examinar la conciencia y otras cosas semejantes.⁴⁸

There are other directories that make similar observations: D. 2 talks of the daily and particular examen to be given along with the First Way of Praying; D. 3 proposes ways to pray with the Ten Commandments as well as of the examen: D. 22-23 proposes half an hour prayer, daily examen and weekly confession along with communion. In D. 47, Ceccotti also makes similar observations with regard to the examen.

Pero para que no se quede del todo sin ayuda una gran parte de los hombres, nuestro B. P. quiso mirar también por los simples e indoctos, en cuanto son capaces de ello, y enseñó en la anotación 18 lo que hay que hacer con ellos, conviene a saber, hay que enseñarles el modo de orar y de examinar la propia conciencia y de frecuentar los sacramentos con alguna explicación de los pecados, etc. Sin embargo los Ejercicios completos se han de dar con grande selección a pocos hombres, y solo a los que tengan fuerzas de cuerpo y de ingenio acomodadas a este ejercicio.⁴⁹

These examples indicate the mind of the directories with regard to the examen and the ejercicio leve.

It must also be noted that Polanco proposes such ejercicio leve but with a difference. While exhorting that not all subjects are going to profit in the same way, he calls for greater use of the examen and simple prayers.

Pero hay que hacer selección de las personas a las cuales se van a dar Ejercicios espirituales, [...] hay que distinguir cuatro géneros de personas, a quienes se podrían dar los Ejercicios espirituales. El primero es el de aquellos a quienes parece ser suficiente si

⁴⁸ D4/1 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 29.

⁴⁹ D47/71-72 in Lop, *Los directorios*, pp. 431-432.

los ayudares a que aprovechen hasta determinado grado, [...] a éstos por lo tanto, propóngaseles en primer lugar el examen contra aquellos defectos que más les molestan; 2º el general y también el cotidiano; 3º enséñeseles a usar el primer modo de orar durante media hora diaria y expónganseles.⁵⁰

Like other directories, here too we find the use of confessions and communion. Polanco explains more about the way to give them as follows:

4º Lo que se dice del examen general de los pensamientos, palabras y obras, si se trata con eruditos, bastará insinuarlo; a los más rudos habrá que explicárselo más, pero no hay que dejarlo por escrito, a menos que lo pidiesen o pareciesen necesitarlo. A unos y otros empero, hay que decirles que hay otras especies de pecados de palabra, pero solo se tocan aquellas que acaecen más frecuentemente; las otras pueden consultarse en los autores que escriben ex profeso acerca de ello.

5º Díctese el examen cotidiano, que contiene cinco puntos, tal como está; para ejercitar el cual ayuda lo dicho acerca de los pecados cometidos de pensamiento, palabra y obra.⁵¹

We notice that Polanco elaborates on the distinction of sins with regard to thoughts, actions and words.

While talking about whom to give the Exercises, Gagliardi insists that the subjects must be chosen according to their natural capacity as well as by their disposition.⁵² And he sees the Exercises mainly meant for purification and to this effect the examen and confession are given. Cordeses, in D. 32 proposes that the examen be made as a preparation for confession of whole life and according to him such a confession is necessary to bring greater fruit.

La 2ª es que se les dé instrucción de examinar cada día sus conciencias. La 3ª mostrarles de examinarse generalmente para bien confesarse, por el modo de orar sobre los mandamientos de Dios y cinco sentidos. La 4ª instruirlos a que frecuenten los santos sacramentos de la confesión y comunión cada 8 o cada 15 días. A estos tales es muy bueno declararles los mandamientos, pecados mortales y obras de misericordia.⁵³

⁵⁰ D20/10 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 141.

⁵¹ D20/48 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 150.

⁵² “A esta ciencia y experiencia del que da los Ejercicios deben corresponder en el que los recibe: en primer lugar, capacidad de la naturaleza y de la salud, luego disposición de la voluntad. [...] todos los Ejercicios completos solo convienen a pocos, y han de darse a personas muy escogidas; y en éstos, además del ingenio y las dotes de naturaleza, se requiere también una voluntad muy decidida y animada a conseguir la perfección espiritual, por la elección del estado, o el progreso en el camino espiritual, como dice allí mismo el S. P. Ignacio.” D46/22 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 398.

⁵³ D32/5 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 298.

However, he makes a distinction of those who can make such confession: there are persons who have capacity for it, while others with lesser ability are to make confession to just to feel good.⁵⁴

Gil González Dávila on the other hand thinks that the daily examen is to be given only to some, for he says,

advierte además acerca del examen general, que es cotidiano, y ha sido compuesto solamente para el uso de los que ya emprendieron hace tiempo la vía espiritual; pues estas especies de pecados, que se cometen de pensamiento y palabra, de los que aquí difusamente se trata, suelen ser más frecuentes en tales hombres; y bastará tomar ejemplo del solo modo de jurar por las creaturas, lo cual ha de ser muy útil para las confesiones, que se llevan a cabo cada mes o también cada ocho días.⁵⁵

He distinguishes the daily examen from the general examen and considers that there are other means to prepare for confession.⁵⁶

4.2 The Order of Giving

We have seen that in the *Directorios* there are clear instructions on whom to give the Exercises and they are also instructive on the order of giving various exercises. When we take a look at these directories, we see that most of them place the examen in the first place. For example, D. 3 says “cuanto al orden, propóngase ante todo el Fundamento; 2., el examen contra algún defecto particular; 3. el examen general; 4. el cotidiano que contiene cinco puntos. Después. el primer día por la tarde (si es posible), propóngase el primer

⁵⁴ He distinguishes in this way: “la 1º es que hagan una confesión general de toda la vida pasada, no como cosa necesaria al que hizo buenas confesiones, sino para estar bien por los grandes provechos espirituales que en ella hay.”

⁵⁵ D31/65, in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 272.

⁵⁶ “Por el contrario, para preparar bien la confesion general de toda la vida pasada, hay que buscar documentos en otra parte; pues los que se dan aquí son poquísimos, si miras a este objeto; [...] al tratar de los pecados que se cometen de pensamiento se olvida casi lo contenido en los autores acerca de la delectacion morosa; cuando empero se trata de los pecados de obra, notas que se dan solo los preceptos en general; así, pues, no fue la mente del autor abarcar en tan breve tratado todo lo que es necesario para el conocimiento de los pecados durante toda la vida humana, sino solamente advertir a los ánimos ya piadosos acerca de los pecados corrientes de cada día.” D31/66 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 272.

ejercicio, para que se empiece a tratar a media noche.”⁵⁷ While the D. 18 proposes the following:

Puede proponérseles, según parece, principalmente lo siguiente o algo de ello; ya que estas cosas en especial suelen agradar y conmover, así como aprovechar a los niños: Se les enseñará y prescribirá todos los días alguna oración vocal por la mañana y por la tarde, tal como el Padre Nuestro, Avemaría, Salve, Credo; asimismo preces a la B. Virgen y algunas de sus oraciones o el rosario.

Examen general diario por la tarde.

Fundamento del último fin.

De la muerte, juicio, infierno, paraíso; aunque la consideración de la muerte y el paraíso suele mover y atraerles más que la del infierno.

De la natividad y reyes.

De la pasión de Cristo.

De la ascensión y coronación de la B. Virgen.

De los beneficios de Dios.⁵⁸

The autor of this directory sees the great use of the examen for persons who have limited capacity for spiritual things.

The Official directory proposes the order in the following way: “cuándo y cómo dar el examen general. Después, aquel mismo día y el siguiente, se da el examen general y el cotidiano. Pero no se da a manera de meditación, sino de instrucción, y a fin de que uno comience a abrir los ojos para conocer los pecados de la vida pasada.”⁵⁹ Here too we find a distinction that is made with regard to the subjects:

buscar las especies de los pecados en otra parte. En cuanto al examen general, es indudable que hay otras muchas especies de pecados, que aquí no se ponen; pero, o aquí se mencionan solamente los pecados que se cometen más frecuentemente, pudiéndose hallar los demás en otros autores que tratan a propósito de esta materia, o este examen se ha escrito solamente para los que ya son algo más espirituales y se abstienen de otros pecados más graves, mientras que suelen caer en éstos con más frecuencia. De modo que no fue la mente de N. P. Ignacio abarcar todos los pecados en tan breve tratado, sino solamente, como queda dicho, recordar a las personas piadosas los que son más frecuentes.⁶⁰

And the same directory talks of the daily examen saying “el examen cotidiano. El examen cotidiano, que abarca cinco puntos, díctese como está. Para hacerlo, sirve la luz que ofrece

⁵⁷ D3/1 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 25.

⁵⁸ D18/64-71 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 126.

⁵⁹ DOFF/115 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 347.

⁶⁰ OFF/116 in *ibid.*

el examen general mediante la distinción de los pecados que se cometen por pensamiento, palabra y obra.”⁶¹ We have many more examples from the directories, and the other directories that give priority to the examen are D. 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 20, 22-23, 24, 26.

4.3 The Examen and Confession

There are a number of directories that explicitly talk of the practice of the examen in relation to confession.

Por eso, al principio, estos tales ponen casi toda su perfección en la penitencia y en la mortificación de la carne, pero pasando luego más adelante a la pureza y alegría de la conciencia, mediante el examen y confesión general y verdadera contrición, satisfacción y enmienda de sus pecados, descubren, como ya más purificados, mayor luz, por lo cual más les cuadra la segunda semana en la vía iluminativa, al conocer otro género de mortificación más perfecta que es la de la parte más propia del hombre como hombre, es decir, de su propio sentir, juicio y voluntad en la verdadera y total indiferencia y resignación de sí mismos en las manos de la obediencia, entregándose todos a la Providencia y voluntad divina a imitación de Cristo, al cual ven así humillado y sujeto no sólo a la ley del Padre, sino también a la obediencia de la Madre y de José, etc.⁶²

Fabio de Fabi presents the examen in relation to confession in this way:

cuando alguno debe prepararse para la confesión general no se satisface con el solo examen general, ya que debe expresar en la misma las circunstancias y especies de los pecados; más aún no se deduce del libro de los Ejercicios que el examen general haya sido establecido para la confesión general, sino más bien para la particular o diaria, y por esto se añade “examen cotidiano”; puesto que lo que allí se dice es aproximadamente lo más común que se comete durante el día, y no parece suficiente para la confesión general por la razón ya dicha.⁶³

Here we see that the author makes a distinction between general examen from the daily examen saying that in order to confess, one needs to prepare well and yet not satisfied with the minimum.

Whereas, D22/23 sees the usefulness of the examen in a different way, for the author Miró says

⁶¹ Off /117 in *ibid.*

⁶² D16/37 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 100.

⁶³ D24/24 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 216.

después, se dan en este día y en el siguiente los restantes exámenes, para que por medio de los mismos vengamos en conocimiento de los pecados de toda la vida pasada, y seamos ayudados para hacer mejor las meditaciones de la primera semana. Pero el examen general no se da a modo de meditación como los demás exámenes, sino principalmente, cualquiera que sea la manera de hacerlo, para que traigamos a la memoria, por medio del mismo, los pecados de toda la vida.⁶⁴

The official directory recommends the examen and confession to get rid of anxiety or guilt that may be present in persons when it proposes

indicar las utilidades de la confesión general. Mas para que lo haga con mayor diligencia y cuidado, se le ha de indicar cuántas son las ventajas de esta confesión general, acerca de las cuales se trata en el mismo libro de los Ejercicios, después del examen general. Y aunque otra no hubiera, ciertamente debería bastar la experiencia que tenemos de que los hombres comúnmente se acercan a la confesión sin examen suficiente, o sin el debido dolor, sin propósito o con propósito muy débil de mejorar la vida, y consiguientemente para alcanzar la paz de la conciencia y quitar los escrúpulos, que si no antes, a lo menos en la hora de la muerte, suelen atormentar el alma y ponerla en trance de perder la vida eterna, mucho aprovecha purificarse una vez de todos los pecados de la vida pasada.⁶⁵

Here the recommendation is to have a balance between diligence in preparing for confession and yet staying away from scrupulousity. The directory says

qué diligencia observar en esta confesión. Por eso también, aunque se ha de evitar la excesiva ansiedad al hacer esta confesión, para que luego no le queden escrúpulos y consecuencias, como a algunos les sucede; pero, por otra parte, se ha de intentar y poner empeño en hacerla tan diligente y cuidadosamente que luego pueda estar el alma segura de haber hecho lo que estaba en su mano, pues de lo contrario jamás podrá disfrutar de la paz del alma y de la tranquilidad de conciencia que hemos dicho. Por eso, además del propio esfuerzo y de la diligencia que ponga el mismo que recibe los Ejercicios, si fuere menester, y según la necesidad de cada uno, debe ser ayudado con alguna indicación metódica, o sea, con algún directorio para confesarse bien, de los muchos que hay, buenos y aptos.⁶⁶

These examples make amply clear that the *Directorios*, while gives general orientation, maintain internal plurality.

⁶⁴ D22-23/30 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 192.

⁶⁵ DOFF/135 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 352.

⁶⁶ DOFF/136 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 352.

4.4 Discernment and the Examen

The *Directorios* talk of discernment principles in the context of election and the observations made are precisely to understand the dynamic of such discretion of spirits. In such comments we find mention of the examen, for example the Official directory observes: “Si aconteciese elegir en el 3er tiempo lo contrario de lo que se eligió en el 2º tiempo, examínense diligentemente por las reglas de discernir los espíritus [...]. Qué debe observar el que va a elegir en estos tiempos. Así pues, esto supuesto, para conocer cuál de los dos extremos que se examinan gusta más a Dios, debe uno notar y advertir en sí mismo [...].”⁶⁷ And there is another similar observation, “supuesta la tranquilidad del alma, qué hay que hacer: supuesta, pues, esta tranquilidad, se deben proponer de una parte los provechos y de otra los inconvenientes provenientes del asunto de que se trata. Cada uno de ellos debe ser bien pesado y examinado para que se vea cuáles tienen más fuerza.”⁶⁸ Though examining is mentioned we know that they are meant as evaluating or observing rather than as examining one’s conscience. The *Directorios* do not talk of the examen in a discerning way.

4.5 The Particular Examen

There is abundant mention of the particular examen in the *Directorios* and it would be interesting to see how they are dealt with. Without intending to list out each and every occasion when the particular examen finds mention, we would like to capture the general pattern of it. The D. 22-23, of Miró states:

mas en la consideración de los pecados debe empezarse por el examen particular; para que primero consideremos y luchemos contra los pecados particulares y principales y contra los vicios que más nos dominan, y de los cuales provienen todos los demás. Pues así como los hombres suelen sufrir principalmente una o dos enfermedades corporales, así también en lo espiritual se dan determinados vicios particulares en nosotros como enfermedades, a los cuales debe dedicarse especial atención para conocerlos y curarlos. Y si este examen se hace con diligencia, ayuda mucho a liberarnos de tales vicios; pues

⁶⁷ DOFF/139 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 353.

⁶⁸ DOFF/201 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 369.

es ley común que la gracia de Dios se concede según la medida del esfuerzo y disposición del hombre.⁶⁹

While this directory talks of predominant vice, Polanco in his comments proposes defects that are oppressing to be the subject matter: “propóngasele el examen particular, para aplicarlo a aquellos defectos que más le oprimen, junto con sus adiciones, a fin de que dedique por lo menos, durante otro día, media hora al mismo, después de la comida y de la cena (además del propósito por la mañana).”⁷⁰

In his comments on the way the Exercises to be given, Fabio de Fabi proposes the particular examen to remove disordered affections. Making a clear distinction between the examen during the Exercises and the ones to be made in daily life, he points out that during the Exercises such examen is proposed with regard to the observation of rules or some defects that need immediate attention “por la tarde del primer día se podría dar, para que lo empiece a practicar el día siguiente, el examen particular acerca de algún vicio particular o pasión o inclinación natural, o afecto desordenado, para que cada uno conozca su enfermedad y comience a arrancar del campo de su alma, donde debe sembrar la buena semilla de los Ejercicios, las malas hierbas y espinas que impedirían este fruto.”⁷¹ Whereas in daily life,

primero se considera en el Fundamento de los Ejercicios el fin último del hombre; y se proponen allí mismo los medios para llegar a él en general, por el recto uso de las creaturas; entonces cuida de remover los impedimentos, que son las propias pasiones y afectos desordenados, por el examen particular, por la penitencia externa e interna. Después se procuran las virtudes con los Ejercicios, finalmente se realiza la unión con Dios por el amor.⁷²

He also points out that during the Exercises, great care must be taken to observe the annotations and to such effect the particular examen as per the additions of each week.⁷³

⁶⁹ D22-23/28 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 192.

⁷⁰ D20/46 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 149.

⁷¹ D25/10 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 221.

⁷² D25/8 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 220.

⁷³ Cf. D25/25 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 223.

In the directory of Gil González Dávila (D. 31) the particular examen finds explicit mention as being useful for entire life and he considers it necessary tool for purity of soul.

El examen particular se da en la 2ª reunión y, este examen mientras duran los Ejercicios debe utilizarse para quitar los defectos, que acerca de las adiciones y reglas de los Ejercicios suelen introducirse, como lo tienes en la última adición de la primera semana. Pero durante toda la vida debe ser de suma utilidad el uso frecuentísimo de este examen, y entre los demás medios para conseguir la pureza de ánimo, solo este es en sumo grado eficaz y adecuado; ello lo enseña Casiano, en la Colación 4ª y Bernardo con frecuencia, y otros que prescribieron documentos para entablar la vida espiritual más aún, los mismos filósofos, llevados por la sola razón, descubrieron que estaban contenidas grandes ventajas en este examen para quebrantar y domar las pasiones de los ánimos; por, lo cual, a pesar de que no sea este tiempo de Ejercicios el más oportuno para enseñar tantas cosas acerca del uso del mismo, al final, cuando deben darse las normas para vivir rectamente, se podrá tratar de este examen más extensa y abundantemente. Advierte finalmente que en aquellas líneas, las cuales en el transcurso de la semana observas ser más reducidas no hay superstición alguna, sino que son únicamente indicios de un cierto ánimo vigilante y diligente en la extirpación de cualquier vicio. D. 20 (46, 47).⁷⁴

Here we see that González Dávila is meticulous in pointing out the way this exercise is to be done.

Similarly, the official directory proposes the particular examen for whole life while making it clear that it must begin during the Exercises: “el examen particular es muy útil. Para esto, pues, servirá el examen particular, cuyo uso, aunque debe continuar durante toda la vida después de terminados los Ejercicios, pero comienza ahora, ya para adquirir alguna práctica en él, ya también porque hay que aplicar este examen a los Ejercicios y a sus Adiciones.”⁷⁵ This directory points out that normally all have some or the other particular vice that needs attention and therefore needs the particular examen: “extirpación de los vicios. Y que aunque en alguno pudieran ser varios los principales, conviene con todo escoger uno y dedicarnos enteramente a desarraigarlo, para que, superado este, traslademos este particular esfuerzo y empeño a otro y luego a otro.”⁷⁶ And the directory points to the great use of the examen for whole life when it says, “recomendar el uso de este examen. Es muy recomendable el uso de este examen por su gran provecho, sobre todo para adquirir la pureza del alma, [...] cuando se le dan al que se marcha, consejos para entablar bien la vida,

⁷⁴ D31/64 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 271.

⁷⁵ DOFF/113 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 347.

⁷⁶ DOFF/112 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 346.

hay que inculcar esto en primera línea.”⁷⁷ This is an important aspect with regard to the daily practice of the examen and we will take it up shortly.

In contrast to this we see that Gagliardi proposes to address all the defects in the particular examen, saying, “del mismo modo los exámenes pueden extenderse a todos los defectos, sean los que sean, aunque en el librito sólo se apliquen a algunos.”⁷⁸ He argues that the particular examen needs to be adapted.

A veces trata una cosa enseñando al mismo tiempo el modo de practicarla; pero conviene hacer distinción, pues aunque la cosa convenga a todos, no sucede lo mismo con el modo: observando, por tanto, la cosa, propónganse distintos modos acomodados a la diversidad de los sujetos; así por ejemplo, el examen de un defecto particular es de mucha importancia para todos; pero aquel modo tan exacto de llevarlo, con aquellas líneas puede ser inútil y aun dañoso para los escrupulosos o para los que tienen poca memoria o poca imaginación. Practiquen éstos también este examen pero de un modo más útil para ellos.⁷⁹

Gagliardi while considering all the defects as possible subject matter for the examen, advocates flexibility in its use. He points out another reason for his conviction:

como con esta frecuente comunicación se descubren las varias tentaciones y los vicios, hay que procurar con mucho cuidado no solo el que sea instruido plenamente acerca del modo de resistir al demonio y combatirlo, sino también, según la necesidad de cada uno, prescribirle determinados ejercicios que sirvan de remedio para todos los vicios, como claramente enseña el S. P. Ignacio; y para tales vicios propónganse exámenes adecuados.⁸⁰

It is interesting to note that the directories vary in their proposals for the subject matter and the way the particular examen is to be made.

The directories clearly indicate the importance of particular examen in the process of going through conversion. As the directories point out it is an important role of the director not only to explain the use of particular examen but also to guide them to apply them in the life of the exercitant.⁸¹

⁷⁷ DOFF/114 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 347.

⁷⁸ D46/7 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 395.

⁷⁹ D46/16 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 396.

⁸⁰ D46/100 in Lop, *Los directorios*, p. 414.

⁸¹ Cf. D4/23, D31/64. Also see the comments of Lop, *Los directorios*, on p. 532: “es misión del director no sólo explicar el funcionamiento o practica del dicho examen, sino también darle a cada ejercitante el modo

4.6 Observations

The *Directorios* treat the examen in a wide variety of ways: the examen as part of the exercises to people who do only some of the exercises, as a preparation for confession, and for entire life. We have seen that all the directories do not treat the examen in the same way and hence there is clear plurality of opinion. Notwithstanding such diverse opinion we can conclude that the examen is given a prime place in the *Directorios*; the practice of the examen is one of the exercises most recommended. The authors make a difference between general examen for confession, daily examen and particular examen. Some directories hold the opinion that the daily examen is meant for preparing for confession while others see this exercise more useful in daily life; confession needs separate dedication.

After our analysis we can draw the following conclusions: the examen always formed part of the ejercicio leve, irrespective of the background of the people; the examen is always prescribed as an exercise to lead one to the experience of God. The examination of conscience, confession, and frequent communion are proposed as means to grow in such experience. And not a few authors consider the effectiveness of the daily examen, different from an examen that is meant as a preparation for confession. Fabio Fabi and González Dávila are clear that the examen is not meant only for the days of the Exercises, and we also see that the *Directorios* clearly talk of the five-point examen as the daily examen.

The directories give greater importance to particular examen as is evident from our analysis. The directories emphasise the importance of getting rid of some of the vicious sins that block the way of progress in life. By asking people to pay attention to the particular sin that oppresses the person, most of the directories underline the importance of gradually rooting them out from one's life. We have also seen that while most authors consider a

concreto de aplicarlo a su caso particular, y sobre todo, para que se aficiona a él, ponderarle la importancia y utilidad de este ejercicio [...] pues se suele percibir más fácil y atentamente y retener por más tiempo lo que en primer lugar se propone. Tanto más diligentemente debe explicarse el mecanismo de este examen cuanto que será una de las armas que con mayor insistencia se propondrá entre los medios de perseverancia [...].”

selection of specific vice as the subject matter of particular examen, Gagliardi thinks otherwise.

Irrespective of the plurality of views on the examen, it is clear that the *Directorios* consider the examen clearly in moralistic manner, i.e. the examen is clearly to get rid of sins or to keep check on disordered affection. There is no mention of the examen as a possible exercise to find the presence of God or to discern the movements of the spirits.

5 The *Epitome*

The *Epitome* is a collection of laws that are scattered in many places and are codified in order to know and use them more consistently.⁸² The first edition of the *Epitome* was published in 1689 during the Generalate of Tirso González de Santalla, after the delegates of the 12th GC – as well as earlier GCs – asked for better organization of important documents.⁸³ The *Epitome* was commissioned in 1682 and ever since they were reedited in 1690, 1704, 1847, 1882, 1924, 1931, 1943, 1949, 1953 and 1962.⁸⁴ The 23rd GC convened by Wlodimir Ledóchowski, while revised al the entire *Epitome* in accordance with the new Canon Law that had come into existence. This document is not a mere fixed summary of the laws, rather a synthesis of various practices of the Society of Jesus,⁸⁵ and hence provides us with insights into the practices that were part of its tradition, especially on the examen.

The third part of the *Epitome* that deals with the “Care of Spiritual Life and Religious Discipline” deals with the examen and proposes it as an exercise of piety. It talks of the examen in the following way:

En particulier, que chacun emploie, avec le plus grand soin selon Dieu, le temps prescrit pour les exercices quotidiens; on consacrerá donc chaque jour:
1°. à l’oraison mentale, suivant l’usage de la Compagnie, une heure entière;
2°. à l’examen de conscience, un quart d’heure à midi et le soir.

⁸² Cf. Introductory comments by Laurent Basanese - P. Antoine Lauras (trans.), “Epitome de l’Institut de la Compagnie de Jésus: Traduction française intégrale du texte latin (édition 1962),” in *Ignaizana Suplementos* 1 (2015) pp. I-VI, here p. I.

⁸³ See GC2/D46; GC6/D47; GC11/D36 and GC 12/D56.

⁸⁴ Cf. Basanese - Lauras, “Epitome de l’Institut,” p. I.

⁸⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, p. III.

3 à la lecture spirituelle en même temps qu'à la préparation de l'oraison mentale du matin, le quart d'heure entier qui précède l'examen du soir ; pour ceux à qui ce temps ne suffirait pas, les Supérieurs y pourvoient ; ceux enfin qui ne sont pas tenus à l'office divin consacreront un temps supplémentaire à la lecture spirituelle, suivant les coutumes de leur Province.⁸⁶

Reminding that the wellbeing of religious life depends on spiritual matters, the document calls for greater devotion and growth in spiritual life. Along with other mental prayers, the examen is also prescribed and it is explicitly stated about the frequency of it.

§1. Pour ceux qui, à l'heure accoutumée, sont retenus par d'autres occupations, on fixera un moment commode pour l'oraison mentale et l'examen.

§2. La visite aussi bien au temps de l'oraison quotidienne que de l'examen doit être faite fréquemment dans nos maisons, particulièrement dans nos Séminaires ; mais pour certaines maisons, pour des raisons particulières, d'autres manières de faire plus opportunes peuvent être établies, avec le consentement du Provincial ou du Général.

§3. Les charges qui dispensent de la visite au temps de l'oraison ou de l'examen sont celles de Supérieur, Ministre, Père spirituel et Confesseur ordinaire de la maison.

§4. Les dimanches et jours de fête, quand les Nôtres ont assisté au sermon, l'examen n'est pas obligatoire.

§5. Il n'est pas prescrit aux Nôtres de se rassembler dans un même lieu pour la prière. Cependant, avec l'approbation du P. Général, on peut garder un usage différent ancien dans certaines Provinces.⁸⁷

These instructions make it clear that the examen was obligatory and it was to be put into daily practice faithfully.

The examen was also mentioned in preparation for renewal of vows:

§1. La rénovation sera précédée d'un triduum au cours duquel ceux qui la feront devront, outre la Confession générale et le compte de conscience dont il est parlé aux n. 186 § 2 et 201. § 2, consacrer chaque jour une demi-heure à une lecture spirituelle et une autre demi-heure à un examen de leur état spirituel, et une heure à la méditation le soir ; les points de celle-ci (comme aussi pour la méditation du matin) seront donnés par le Père spirituel ou par un autre Père; la veille de la rénovation, ils prendront la discipline et feront abstinence. En outre, ils feront une accusation publique de leurs fautes.⁸⁸

The document also had clear instruction on how to carry out the renewal.

⁸⁶ *Epitome* 182. We make use of the French translation but refer to the document number so as to facilitate reference to the original Latin text.

⁸⁷ *Epitome* 183.

⁸⁸ *Epitome* 424.

Elsewhere in the *Epitome* we find reference to the practice of the examen, although in different context, underlining the importance it had in the overall pastoral plan of the Society. With regard to the moral and religious formation of the youth, the *Epitome* prescribes:

On invitera les élèves à recevoir souvent le Sacrement de Pénitence, et cela au moins une fois par mois; on les encouragera aussi à recevoir souvent, même chaque jour, le pain Eucharistique.

§2. Ils assisteront pieusement à la Messe autant que possible chaque jour, ce qui est prescrit au n. 643 § 3 étant observé. De même, on les encouragera à faire un examen de conscience chaque soir ; ils réciteront aussi le Chapelet; quant aux Litanies de la Vierge on les dira tous les samedis.⁸⁹

The *Epitome* also instructs that the Spiritual Exercises should be given to people of capabilities while the rest be given *ejercicios leves* where the examen is one of the exercises.⁹⁰

The binding force of the examen in the Society of Jesus can be seen in the following prescription of the *Epitome*:

aucune occupation, pas même en vue d'assurer le salut du prochain, ne doit entraver la recherche de la perfection personnelle ; c'est pourquoi ceux qui habitent en dehors de nos maisons n'écourteront pas les temps ordinaires de prière et d'examen de conscience, si ce n'est parfois qu'ils y soient amenés par la nécessité ou par la charité ; et, autant que les circonstances le permettent, ils seront fidèles aux Règles de la Compagnie ; et ils apprendront à ne pas avoir de fréquentation avec les laïcs ou trop imprudente ou trop séculière.⁹¹

Thus, this important document, like some other documents,⁹² presented the examen as an aid for perfection of souls.

⁸⁹ *Epitome* 385.

⁹⁰ Cf. *Epitome* 669.

⁹¹ *Epitome* 609.

⁹² A similar document that prescribed the examen in the Society of Jesus is the *Thesaurus Spiritualis*. The *Thesaurus* contains a summary of the *Constitutions*, the *Spiritual Exercises*, the *Directorios*, some letters of Ignatius, etc. See *Thesaurus Spiritualis Societatis Iesu*, Santander, 1936.

6 The Examen in the General Congregations

The General Congregation (GC) is the ultimate governing body in the Society of Jesus; it is a collective organ that has the power to elect the Superior General. Taking cue from the *Formula of Institute*, the General Congregation is “la suprema instancia de gobierno, en cuanto tiene el poder legislativo, y en su caso también el judicial y administrativo. Su competencia son los asuntos de mayor trascendencia, como además de la elección del nuevo General elegir los consultores o asistentes y admonitor del General, declarar los puntos esenciales de la Fórmula del Instituto, pero no cambiarlos; [...]”⁹³ As the ultimate legislative body,⁹⁴ the GCs deliberate on selected matters and the resulting document is termed as “Decrees” and only another GC can modify or annul them.⁹⁵ Hence the decrees and the *actae* of the GCs give an idea as how they have shaped the life of the Society of Jesus right from the beginning. The first GC that chose Diego Laínez as the superior general was one among many to influence the practice of the examen and we see that the concern on the type of prayer is recurrent in the many later congregations. The personality of the superior generals also has played a role in shaping the course of action in the congregations, especially in the first sixty years of the Society of Jesus. Here we would like to analyse the decrees on prayer and the practice of the examen in order to fathom the line of thought the delegated gathered for the GC chose for the Society. It will be of special interest to study the generalates of Diego Laínez, Francisco de Borja, Everard Mercurian and Claudio Aquaviva, among many others, as they have left a lasting impression on the life of the Society of Jesus and more specifically on spiritual life in it.

6.1 The First General Congregation

The first ever GC in the life of the Society of Jesus was unique in many ways, not just because it galvanized a tradition that was to continue for the rest of the history but also because it adopted many practices that were to shape definitely the life of the subsequent

⁹³ José Martínez de la Escalera, “Congregaciones,” in *DEI* pp. 397-399, here 397.

⁹⁴ The GC consists of members represented from all the provinces and one third of the delegates attend *ex officio*, while two thirds are elected. See Padberg, *For Matters*, p. ix.

⁹⁵ Cf. Martínez de la Escalera, “Congregaciones,” p. 398.

generations. At this GC five of the first companions were present, and the other delegated present were men who had first-hand experience of the spirit of the founder. The style they adopted for themselves, hence, was going to be decisive as it would have been in continuation with the charism they had chosen for themselves.

At the death of Ignatius in 1556 there were twelve provinces and over a thousand Jesuits spread all over the world.⁹⁶ Owing to the complex political situation, the GC could not be held until after two years and the confusion over if the “founding Fathers” should govern the Society of Jesus⁹⁷ until the GC approved the *Constitutions* made things more difficult. After such initial crisis the 22 delegates gathered in Rome elected Diego Laínez as the general, who had already been acting as the vicar general since the death of Ignatius. Diego Laínez was born as the eldest of seven children of Juan Laínez and Isabel Gómez, in 1512 at Almazán, Spain.⁹⁸ He did his initial studies at Sigüenza and later did his philosophical studies at Alcalá from 1528 to 1532. While doing his theological studies at Paris, between 1532 to 1536, he made the Spiritual Exercises⁹⁹ and in 1534, along with other First Companions he made the vows at Montmatre, Paris. In 1537 Laínez, along with Ignatius and Faber, reached Rome and later they were involved in preaching and teaching Catechism. He taught for a sometime at the university of La Sapienza de Roma, at Parma before the Society was officially approved and the members made their solemn vows in 1541. As a theologian, Laínez worked in Venice for three years, and later, from 1546 along with Salmerón, Laínez took part in the Council of Trent. His contribution to the decree on Justification is outstanding. While attending the sessions of the council that was held at Bologna as the official theologian of the Pope, Laínez preached at many places like Florence, Perugia, Siena, Padua and so on.¹⁰⁰ Other than his contributions in theological field,¹⁰¹ Laínez also was instrumental in starting a college at Naples, in the reform of the diocese of Montreal in Sicily before he was appointed as the provincial of Italy. At the

⁹⁶ For a brief history on the growth see Padberg, *For Matters*, pp. 2ff.

⁹⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 3.

⁹⁸ Cf. Mario Scaduto, “Laínez, Diego,” in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1601-1605, here p. 1601.

⁹⁹ Laínez made his Spiritual Exercises in 1533/1534. Cf. Javier Cía Blasco, “Itinerario biográfico” in Paul Oberholzer (ed.), *Diego Laínez (1512-1565) and his Generalate*, Roma: IHSI, 2015, p. 37.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Scaduto, “Laínez, Diego,” p. 1602.

¹⁰¹ See Cía, “Itinerario biográfico,” pp. 40-41 for more of his involvement in helping the Pope counter the problems of simony.

death of Ignatius, Laínez was elected as the vicar general and at the convocation of the GC, delayed by almost two years, he was elected superior general. This first GC examined the *Constitutions* and approved exactly as it was composed by Ignatius, thus giving it legal status. The congregation passed more than one hundred and thirty decrees, many dealing with the election of the general. But the decree that concerns us here is the one on the congregation's reaction to the proposal for long period of prayer.

We know that the *Constitutions* of the Society prescribes an hour and a half of prayer for all in the following way: “consequently, in addition to confession and Communion every eight days and daily Mass, they will have one hour, during which they will recite the Hours of Our Lady, examine their conscience twice each day, and add other prayers according to each one's devotion to fill out the rest of the aforesaid hour. They will do all this according to the order and judgment of their superiors [...]” [342]. Some members of the congregation however wanted a change in this regulation as there had long been different voices demanding more time in prayer¹⁰² and therefore we must see the response of the members against this background. The decree passed by the delegates reads as follows:

regarding prayer, the statement was made that some thought more time should be spent therein than the *Constitutions* prescribe. The answer to this was that the *Constitutions* are to be observed and nothing else definitely prescribed in them. But as to novices, the rules of the novice master state that they should pray more than an hour, as the *Constitutions* suggest, and ordinarily are not obliged to pray for two hours. Nevertheless, in particular cases, the superior can prolong or lessen the time. As to the professed, if they are not acting according to the intent of the *Constitutions*, the superiors of the houses might help them and prescribe such time for prayer as shall seem proper. This was stated about temporal coadjutors: special care is needed here, but a definite time should not be prescribed for them other than what is stated in chapter 4 of Part 4. Nevertheless, the *epikeia* wherewith superiors may prolong, lessen, or commute the prayer time for scholastics has a place in all the above cases.¹⁰³

This decree clearly ratified what the *Constitutions* prescribed, and by refusing to change any aspect of it the delegates reaffirmed the faith in what Ignatius prescribed for the

¹⁰² The issue concerning the length of prayer had been raised during the time of Ignatius, and it continued often later, and Ignatius reprimanded some who wanted lengthy prayers. *MonNad*, 11, 32; *Memoriale P. da Camara*, no. 256, in *SdeSI*, I, 278, and *FN*, I, 676-677; also no. 196 in *SdeSI*, I, 250-251 and *FN*, I, 644-645. See, among many others, the article of Edean, “The Original line,” pp. 35-48.

¹⁰³ GC1/D97.

scholastics in the *Constitutions*. We also know that the *Constitutions* also had prescribed two examinations of conscience along with rosary and other devotions for the coadjutors [Const. 344].¹⁰⁴ The first GC thus maintained the hour-and-half prayer period for those in formation¹⁰⁵ where the examen was an integral part.

The first GC also maintained the existing practice of not forcing on a set time for prayer, by affirming that the existing practices were to continue: “is it expedient that all pray together at a particular time of day or night? The response was that prayer is not to be held in common, since the mind of our father Ignatius is clear from his words. These norms apply to ordinary prayer, not to extraordinary prayer, such as may be publicly instituted for a time as occasion dictates.”¹⁰⁶ In the mind of the delegates of the first GC, thus there was no doubt about the role of examen, that it occupied a place after other mental prayers.

The GC under Laínez, thus maintained the prescriptions of the *Constitutions* and did not consider it necessary to change anything, even having to pray together in community. However, that did not mean that the members of the Society did not pray together since the Pope Paul IV had ordered them to have choir. From the end of the first GC choir was established and this practiced continued only for a while.¹⁰⁷

6.2 The Second General Congregation

At the death of Laínez in 1565, Francisco de Borja – who was already an assistant to Laínez – was elected as the vicar general and he duly convoked the GC. Borja was elected

¹⁰⁴ “Otros (como podrían ser algunos coadjutores temporales que no supiesen leer) después de la misa tendrán su hora, en la cual [C] dirán el rosario o corona de Nuestra Señora, con examinarse asimismo dos veces en el día, o algunas otras oraciones a su devoción, como está dicho de los escolares.” Const. [344]. Though the coadjutor members do not have to recite the Office, note that the examen is prescribed for all.

¹⁰⁵ The *Constitutions* talk of the prayer duration of those in formation, either scholastics or coadjutors, and do not prescribe such period of prayer for those already formed, as it is clear from what we saw. See Miguel Á. Fiorito, “Ignatius’ Own Legislation on Prayer,” in *Woodstock Letters* 97/2 (1968), pp. 166ff. for a detailed discussion on this, or Miguel Á. Fiorito, “La ley ignaciana de la oración,” in *Stromata* XXIII (1967) pp. 3-89.

¹⁰⁶ GC1/D98.

¹⁰⁷ Pope Paul IV insisted on having choir and this practice lasted till the death of the Pope since the modification was made only orally. But, as we will see later, this practice was to resume years later. Cf. Padberg, *For Matters*, p. 4.

general with a clear majority in the congregation that passed more than 120 decrees, many of which had momentous impact upon the life of the Society in the later years. Among them was one on prayer that was decisive in many ways, and the decree reads, “brought up and debated for several days was a topic initially treated in chapter 4 of Part 4 of the Constitutions, namely, increasing the time for prayer. At length the congregation agreed that Father Superior General in his prudence might increase the time, as he would judge proper in the Lord, taking into account his understanding of persons, regions, and so on.”¹⁰⁸ This decree was in many ways going away from the earlier practices of an hour of prayer, just as envisaged by Ignatius.¹⁰⁹ Many scholars consider this decree as the key in understanding the way the Society of Jesus dealt with such an important issue.

The General Borja did act upon the power given to him and allowed some provinces to extend the time of prayer. At the congregation the Italian, Portuguese and Spanish provinces had demanded fixed and lengthened time while other two provinces, namely the German and French wanted fidelity to the decision of the founder. Within two months from the conclusion of the Congregation, General Borja prescribed for some provinces an hour of prayer in addition to two examens.¹¹⁰ In the same line, there were other practices that were started by Borja: at the close of the GC the news reached Rome that Suleiman the Magnificent, at the head of the Moslem forces, was laying siege to Malta. Borja offered six Jesuits to the Pope to take part in the crusade being preached by Philip II of Spain and Pope Pius IV, and next year when the Turks were even more menacing Borja introduced litanies, in line with the call by the Pope for processions and litanies. He wrote to all the provinces with these words, “we consider it our duty to participate with the means proper to our vocation. Therefore, the litany of the saints is to be recited daily at some given time.”¹¹¹ And what it did to the Society was “but when the peril receded, they remained a permanent

¹⁰⁸ GC2/D29.

¹⁰⁹ This issue would come up again in later GC where the practice of an hour of prayer would be restored in GC4/D5. Fiorito captures it well when he says, “The controversy about the Ignatian law on prayer, with one side favoring it and the other favoring the present law introduced into the Society since the generalate of Borgia, has been going on for almost a century, if not for four centuries.” Fiorito, “Ignatius’ Own Legislation,” p. 153. We will discuss this issue further in the section on the fourth GC.

¹¹⁰ See de Guibert, *The Jesuits*, p. 194. For a detailed analysis of the development of prayer tradition in the Society see Leturia, “La hora matutina,” pp. 189-268.

¹¹¹ As quoted by Otto Karrer, “Borgia’s Influence on the Development of Prayer-life in the Society of Jesus,” in *Woodstock Letters* 96 (1967) pp. 340-364, here p. 355.

part of Jesuit life, another departure from the way Ignatius conceived prayer in the Society of Jesus.¹¹² Thus we see that the GC had given Borja a broad mandate and his own personal likings influenced the tradition, as some observed, “his own personal predilection for solitude, penance, and prayer led to results that were to perdure for centuries.”¹¹³

It is true that there are divergent opinions on the role of Borja in shaping the Jesuit spiritual tradition – many scholars argue that Borja’s personal inclinations for monastic style of religious life did much harm; others say it was inevitable that the followers of Ignatius adopted practices from around them. One such example, where Otto Karrer argues that the changes that were brought about at the second GC were result of outside influence as well as due to the kind of training that many received under people who considered Ignatian spirituality as simply “a new patch on an old monk’s-habit.”¹¹⁴ He writes in defence of Borja:

for even those who lived according to the mind of Ignatius tended to lose some of their assurance and conviction in face of the actual situation. In any case, the superiors of the Society believed they noted more and more how the ideal – so dear to Ignatius – of continual union with God and of purity of intention which he expected his sons to realize in all their activity was hard to attain for the vast majority, unless the spirit renewed itself day after day in long periods of meditation.¹¹⁵

Further, while pointing out the monastic elements brought about by Borja, Karrer defends Borja and makes an interesting point:

thus, we can look upon the ascetical character of Borgia’s spirituality, its “monastic wrappings” included, as a providential quality of the man himself. It helped him to achieve effectively what the evolution of the Society demanded: to set up a structural organization, so far as it seemed necessary, in place of the “spirit.” It is surely no accident that, with the possible exception of the northern countries, Borgia’s innovations came off with relative smoothness. By and large, they were more the expression of an existing spirituality than its cause.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Padberg, *For Matters*, p. 6.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Karrer cites the example of Bustamente the first novice master who come under this category. See Karrer, “Borgia’s Influence” p. 352.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 363.

Whatever be the case, Borja had a great influence on the prayer and examen tradition of the Society of Jesus, be it for the introduction of the Litanies or for imposing of uniformity of prayer on all members of the Society, including for the professed.¹¹⁷ There were also other decrees that brought about changes in the life of the Jesuits, like setting up of separate houses of formation and novitiates. However, the decree giving power to the general to increase the length of time of prayer influenced the tradition of the Society of Jesus in the sense that in the way it prayed, therefore, directly shaping the practice of the daily examen.

6.3 The Third General Congregation

The influence of Everard Mercurian in the area of prayer tradition and the examen is decisive. Mercurian advocated faithfulness to true Ignatian way of praying and censured Antonio Cordeses as well as Baltasar Álvarez for their distinctive styles of prayer.¹¹⁸ The stand taken by Mercurian influenced the style of prayer that the Society adopted for itself and some would say that the failure of Mercurian to abrogate the custom of an hour's meditation started by Borja in a way reinforced it. Thus, Mercurian is a key figure in our study of the daily examen.

At the death of Francisco Borja in 1572, Polanco the vicar general convoked the GC. This congregation was marked by the controversies surrounding the election of general as the Pope had clearly indicated his wish of not selecting a Spaniard to such a post. There were many who had resentment at the Spanish predominance in the Society of Jesus, not only of the general but in other offices as well and Pope Gregory XIII vocalized this through his cardinals. There was also another discord – that of the so called New Christians. The resentment against descendants of converts from Judaism was prominent in the Spanish

¹¹⁷ Karrer argues that “the difference from the old regulations lies not so much in a prolongation of the time to be given to prayer as, more important, in the uniformity of the obligation imposed upon all, including the professed.” And “in any event, we shall have to admit that the lives of individual religious at this time did provide reasons for this step. At the same time we need not deny that with this move a fundamental Ignatian principle was abandoned and the way opened to further general regulations for the spiritual life.” *Ibid.*, p. 353.

¹¹⁸ For more about these controversies on prayer see Edean “The Original Line,” pp. 35-48 and “The Strange Style,” pp. 351-398.

peninsula and this sensitive issue also added to the troubles.¹¹⁹ Though the Pope had expressed his preferences later he gave them the freedom to elect anyone as the general, and the forty-nine delegates gathered elected Everard Mercurian, a Belgian nationality, on 23 April, 1573.

Everard Mercurian was born in 1514 at Marcour, in the Prince-Bishopric of Liege in Belgium, as the son of a Lambert Lardinois.¹²⁰ In 1536, at the age of twenty-two, he joined the College of St. Jerome in Liege to study for priesthood and in 1544 he received a master's degree in Arts. During this study, Mercurian came in touch with Jesuits like Jerónimo Doménech, Pedro Ribadeneira and Francisco de Estrada who had much influence on him.¹²¹ Mercurian made the Spiritual Exercises under Paolo d'Achille in 1547 and entered the novitiate in September, 1548.¹²² In 1552 Mercurian was in Rome and later was sent by Ignatius to Perugia to start a College there. In 1556, Laínez, in his capacity as the vicar general, appointed Mercurian as the commissary of Lower Germany and of the Low Countries. He attended the First GC that elected Laínez as the General, and at the end of the GC Mercurian was named the provincial of Lower Germany and Belgium. In 1565 Mercurian was made one of the four Assistants to the general, according to the new regulations decreed at the second GC. In 1569 Borja appointed Mercurian as visitor to France. With such wide-range of experience he was chosen as the Superior General at the third GC in 1573.

The third GC promulgated more than 90 decrees and many dealt with administrative matters like the election of general and what procedures to be followed. A decree on the formation of novices was formulated after all the delegates discussed the matter,¹²³ and another decree that dealt about prayer was decree 36 that spelt out on what manner of chant

¹¹⁹ See Padberg, *For Matters*, pp. 6-7.

¹²⁰ Cf. Mario Fois, "Everard Mercurian," in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1611-1614, here 1611. See also McCoog, *The Mercurian Project*, p. 1.

¹²¹ Mercurian's vocation to the Society is largely due to the influence of Francisco Estrada. While in Paris Faber was the spiritual director for Mercurian. See Fois, "Everard Mercurian," p. 1611.

¹²² Cf. *ibid.*

¹²³ GC3/D31: "After a daily schedule for novices had been read to the delegates, the congregation decreed that both the schedule and the delineation of the office of Master of Novices should be remanded to Father General, insofar as both of these belong to regulations and the system of governing."

to be used in the churches.¹²⁴ Other than this decree, nothing major was issued related to prayer or the type of examen to be used, like in the previous GCs.

6.4 Claudio Aquaviva and the Three GCs

Claudio Aquaviva was born as the second son to Giovanni Antonio and Isabella Spinelli, the Dukes of Atri, on 14 September, 1543.¹²⁵ After the completion of studies in Humanity and Mathematics Aquaviva went to Perugia to study law, in order to pursue ecclesiastical career. While working at the Papal curia under Pope Pius IV, Aquaviva came in contact with Jesuits like Francisco de Borja, Juan Polanco and Cristóbal Rodríguez. Aquaviva was admitted to the Society by Borja in 1567, and during his novitiate Aquaviva completed his theological studies. Aquaviva was ordained in 1574¹²⁶ and pronounced his solemn vows on 1 April, 1576. After a brief period as professor of philosophy at the Roman College he was made the Rector of Seminario Romano and in 1575 that of the College at Naples. Aquaviva served as the provincial of Naples as well as of Rome.

When Everard Mercurian died on 1 August, 1580, Olivier Mannaerts, in his capacity as the vicar general called the General Congregation. The fifty-nine delegates assembled almost unanimously elected Claudio Aquaviva, who was just 37 years old and just fourteen years in the Society, as the General.¹²⁷ During his tenure, the Society grew from 21 provinces to 32 and from a little more than 5,000 the number of Jesuits grew to over 13,000 and this demanded much more centralization of governance. The influence of Claudio Aquaviva as the longest serving superior general of the Society is still being fathomed and many agree that during the 34 years of his Generalate the Society took a

¹²⁴ “Chant that has been introduced into the churches of the Society is hereafter to be such as the declaration prescribes in Part 6, chapter 3, number 4, letter B. It is to be devout, smooth, and simple, not complicated or assertive. The practice is to be continued in those places only where Ours can conveniently do so without the assistance of externs and the practice’s objective is realized, as it is proposed in the aforesaid constitution and in decree 22* of the Second Congregation. However, there should be a place here for dispensation (especially in heretical and infidel territory) regarding the introduction, retention, and manner of chant, as well as of its standard of excellence, in accord with the will and judgment of Reverend Father General.” GC3/D36.

¹²⁵ Cf. Mario Fois, “Aquaviva, Claudio,” in *DHCHJ*, vol. II, pp. 1614-1621, here 1614.

¹²⁶ Cf. *ibid.* There is some ambiguity regarding the year of his ordination, if it is 1574 or as Scaduto maintains as 1572.

¹²⁷ Cf. Padberg, *For Matters*, p. 8 for a short history surrounding this GC.

definitive direction, especially with regard to spiritual practices. One of Aquaviva's concerns was spiritual renewal. With the letters *Spiritus ac fervoris renovatio* (1583) and *Ad augendum et renovandum spiritum in Societate* (1588) and *De renovatione spiritus et correspondentia cum Deo* (1604)¹²⁸ Aquaviva exhorted all to maintain personal perfection and cultivation of solid and perfect virtues, all based on the *Constitutions* and the *Spiritual Exercises*.¹²⁹

6.4.1 The Three General Congregations and the Examen

The fourth GC, of 1581, is important in our discussion as it took up again the question of the length of prayer. The decree reads,

should the custom of a full hour of prayer over and above the time of the double examen not be retained? This custom was introduced by Reverend Father Borgia on the authority given him by the Second General Congregation in its decree 41. Or should the practice of a half hour's prayer and the two examens be restored instead, as in the Constitutions and in the formulation of decree 18, Title 6, of the First Congregation? The decision was this: The aforesaid one full hour of uninterrupted prayer, in addition to the two daily examens, is by all means to be retained as a devout and salutary custom, as introduced by Reverend Father Borgia; and, retaining the formulation of the aforementioned decree of the Second Congregation, it is to be confirmed by the decree of this congregation, as this present decree does in fact confirm it.¹³⁰

The importance of this decree in the life of prayer-tradition of the Society of Jesus can be gauged from the fact that this consolidated the hour-long prayer for the next four centuries, and we can summarise it as follows: "in the history of the Society, this meant effectively that until the Thirty-First General Congregation in 1965-66, besides the two examinations of conscience at noon and night, Jesuits would also devote another hour to prayer every day. Eventually, by a series of customs this became the rigidly set time of the morning meditation."¹³¹

Another GC that influenced the tradition of examen was the sixth one in 1608, also convoked by Aquaviva. This was also the congregation which was held after the

¹²⁸ Cf. Fois, "Aquaviva, Claudio," p. 1616.

¹²⁹ Cf. Ibid., "El fin fundamental de estas intervenciones era mantener vivo el fervor por la perfección personal y el cultivo de "virtudes sólidas y perfectas", según el espíritu de las Constituciones y los Ejercicios."

¹³⁰ GC4/D5.

¹³¹ Padberg, *For Matters*, p. 9.

congregation of procurators clearly voted to hold a GC. During this GC there was unsuccessful attempt to introduce obligatory fast and abstinence during Advent¹³² as well as to promote greater religious spirit in the Order. After considering the request of some provinces for exception to an existing rule,¹³³ and the need to interpret other rule, the GC observed that it was not proper to initiate a custom that would be common to the entire Society, rather each province was to choose its own practices. Here again we see that, in order to foster religious spirit and discipline, some practices are recommended for the entire Society, while many other postulates were rejected by the congregation.¹³⁴

It was the same GC that decided to separate the younger members from the rest of the community in order to facilitate better formation as well as to maintain the fervour acquired during the novitiate.¹³⁵ The separation of those in formation would be a definite step in the training tradition of the Jesuits. Another important decision that was made at this congregation was the practice of eight-day Spiritual Exercises – obligatory for all, annually. The same congregation also prescribed a three-day recollection on spiritual matters for those who did not make their final vows and this was aimed at spiritual renewal. The commission set up to propose means for spiritual renewal proposed these two practices and the subsequent approval by the Congregation reinforced the prayer tradition in the Society of Jesus and thus shaped the practice of the examen. What is important in all these is the fact that while the practices of three-day recollection and annual retreat were introduced, the practice of examen remained unchanged. There was neither any changes to the frequency or any alteration in the way it was to be done daily. That is to say, the examen was just assumed as part of the spiritual life of every Jesuit, whether formed or still in the initial years in religious life.

¹³² For a short note on the background of this practice, see Padberg, *For Matters*, p. 13.

¹³³ Cf. GC1/D96; GC5/D27.

¹³⁴ See Padberg, *For Matters*, pp. 13-14. “Several postulates were discussed as part of a concern to foster the religious spirit and to buttress religious discipline. Among them was the proposal, rejected by the congregation, that the customary recreation period should be so divided that after one half hour of recreation, a quarter hour should be spent in retailing examples from the lives of the saints or other such persons and another quarter hour in saying the rosary or in reading and meditating on a pious book (GC6/6). Some consider that this proposal was the probable source of the exemplum in the novitiate, a brief pious story that one of the novices told to his brethren at recreation time.”

¹³⁵ See GC6/D16.

6.5 Spiritual Renewal and the Seventh General Congregation

After serving as the general for 34 years Aquaviva died on January 31, 1651, leaving the Society with 13,000 Jesuits all over the world. The sheer size of 550 Jesuit communities spread over 33 provinces,¹³⁶ coupled with other causes had triggered a call for a renewal of spiritual life, as we have seen already. The theme of spiritual renewal is an important issue if we have to better understand the subsequent GCs as far as prayer and the examen are concerned. Regarding the promotion and increase of the spiritual life, based on the recommendations of the commission set up, the seventh congregation decreed the following practices for the Society of Jesus:

1. First, that visitation which the instruction for renovation of spirit mentions, is understood to be a daily one. A trusted person in each house and college is therefore to be appointed to devote himself to this task. He is not always to follow the same time schedule for his visitation. No one should be allowed to sleep whenever he wishes; rather, the time for rising and praying is to be fixed for each. But if anyone normally needs a longer time, the provincial is to be consulted and his visitor advised of the details. It will be necessary also to designate a visitor and a time suitable for meditation for those who are assigned to domestic chores during the time of prayer. These include the sacristan, doorkeeper, cook, and those who are serving Mass at the time. Those who are delayed by extraordinary tasks should notify the superior, so that because of these difficulties he may provide a different time, lest anyone omit prayer on any day. Let the greatest care be paid to those who are at villa.
2. At the time of prayer and examen, no one is to be called to the door or the church without the express permission of the superior, except on the more solemn feasts, when time is devoted to hearing confessions. But if anyone is in the church (unless he is engaged in hearing penitents' confessions, or some important business or person requires otherwise), he is to betake himself to his room upon hearing the examen bell. The same is to be said for those who are speaking with externs at the door of the house.
3. Hereafter, let a full quarter hour be available in addition before the evening examen, reserved as it were for each one, so that he can devote himself to spiritual reading and at the same time prepare himself for the morning meditation.
4. Effort should be made to have everyone make the annual Spiritual Exercises exactly, as prescribed in canon 9 of the Sixth Congregation, not admitting any excuse whatsoever and putting aside entirely any occupation or distraction. Thus, at this time they are not to give themselves to business or confessions, but are to observe that application of time and method whereby the full Exercises are wont to be made, especially in regard to setting all else aside.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Cf. Padberg, *For Matters*, pp. 14-15.

¹³⁷ GC7/D25.

The theme of spiritual renewal is the concern of many of them and there were directives to maintain the vigour of religious life. Though the GCs do not explicitly talk of the examen in these decrees, it is implied that they continue with the practice of the examen as prescribed in the *Constitutions*.

6.6 Other General Congregations

Based on the proposals by the commission set up, the eighth GC in 1646 decreed that the recommendations of the previous GCs be complied with and no changes made, especially with regard to spiritual reading. The concern of the GC was the compliance of all with the recommendations and we notice that they hardly made any new aspect to the way examen was to be made. The concern was renewal which implied maintaining the existing practices and the superior was expected to ensure everyone followed these practices.

The subsequent GCs did not add anything more with regard to the examen and in the 18th GC in 1765 recommended,

superiors should not think that they have satisfied the obligations of their office unless they take exact care to see that, by use of the means which the Society possesses and has so often prescribed, a strong interest in prayer and spiritual matters notably flourishes in every one of our houses, and unless in particular each individual carefully and fruitfully performs the Spiritual Exercises every year.¹³⁸

The concern of spiritual renewal is found again in GC 22 in 1820 where the decrees clearly talk of need for practices to enhance spiritual advancement, without mentioning anything new with regard to the examen. Though we do not find any specific mention of the examen, this preoccupation of renewal of spiritual atmosphere in the Society is worth mentioning.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ GC18/D22.

¹³⁹ “Special care should be devoted to the spiritual advancement of the coadjutor brothers, and what is prescribed about them should be more carefully observed in all respects, but especially the prescriptions of decree 30 of the Sixth Congregation and in decree 24 of the Seventh. The Rules of Modesty, so earnestly observed by our early fathers and so strongly recommended for the renewed Society even from its first congregation, are to be observed with great care.” GC22/D44. We will take up this theme again in our section on the letters of Fathers Generals.

6.7 General Congregation 27

The 26th GC of 1915 had asked for a Congregation which would revise the laws of the Society in its entirety through a decree. This was to review the ordinances and instructions of the General, the various rules, decrees and canons of the GC and to make the laws better adapted to contemporary needs. The desire of such a request was easier application, in order to make the accommodation of the law with the current papal legislation or to make changes wherever necessary.¹⁴⁰ The GC 26 had recommended

a new edition of our Institute, fully conforming to this revision of our law, should be prepared as the authentic formulation of the Society's law and of our spiritual formation. And in this edition the following is to be observed: The General Examen and the Constitutions with their declarations, along with the decrees of the earlier congregations, are to "remain inviolate" "as they are now published."¹⁴¹

Precisely to undertake such renewal, the 27th GC was called by the then General Wlodimir Ledóchowski, in 1923. The Congregation made proposals on various aspects of the Society like the *Constitutions*, on poverty, on 'Spiritual training of ours and on religious disciplines,' etc.¹⁴² These decrees had a clear aim: to renew the Institute and review all the decrees of earlier congregations so as to adapt the laws making them more suitable to modern day.¹⁴³

The decrees here are termed as Collected Decrees (CD) as they are based on the existing laws of the Society, in order to remain faithful to the spirit and the prescriptions of the *Constitutions*. Though they deal with the examen, they are nothing more than duplications on the laws on prayer and examen.¹⁴⁴ For example, under the section on "Care

¹⁴⁰ Cf. GC26/D111#1.

¹⁴¹ GC26/D11#3.

¹⁴² See Padberg, *For Matters*, p. 518. The decrees that were approved by this GC were termed as "Collected Decrees" because they are repetitions, modifications or reiteration of the existing rules.

¹⁴³ "The Twenty-seventh General Congregation, [...] makes its own the norm that was laid down by the last general congregation for this review and this collection of the Institute: it has reviewed all decrees of earlier congregations and has condensed the laws [...] it did this so that, while remaining faithful to the spirit and the prescriptions of the Constitutions of our holy founder and to the traditions of the Society, our laws might be adapted and made more suitable for modern-day use, [...]" GC27/D1 p. 527.

¹⁴⁴ "It declares as its intent that the statutes of earlier congregations do not retain the force of law unless (and then only to the degree that) they are repeated in the documents that it has published, that is, in the Collected Decrees, the formulas of congregations, and the rules approved by its own authority." GC27/D1#2.

of the Spiritual Life and Religious Life,” the GC spoke clearly on the issue of prayer: a complete hour for mental prayer, an uninterrupted quarter of an hour before the evening examen to spiritual reading, etc.¹⁴⁵ Here again the examen is retained as it was in earlier instances, given the same importance and same frequency – twice daily, as in previous GCs.

By stating more explicitly the practice of mental prayer and the examen, the 27th GC wished to continue the earlier tradition.

§1. For those who are engaged in other occupations during the ordinary hour, a suitable time should be assigned for mental prayer and the examen.

§2. Each day, at the time of prayer and of examen, a trustworthy individual should visit all, even those who with permission perform these exercises at a different time, except for those who are exempt from this visitation because of their office or for any other legitimate reason.

§3. Ours are not to be required to gather all together in the same place for purposes of prayer. However, with the permission of the general, this can be required in the case of the coadjutor brothers in accord with a long-standing usage in some provinces.¹⁴⁶

From these, it is very clear that the 27th GC adopted and reaffirmed the role of spiritual tradition and the examen has a place just as it had been prescribed in the previous Congregations, especially the first seven.

6.8 The Thirtieth General Congregation

The thirtieth General Congregation was convoked by the General John Baptist Janssens in 1956, with a clear goal of dealing with matters of major importance to the Society of Jesus like its life and work. The congregation began on 6 September, 1957¹⁴⁷ and it set up twelve commissions to study various aspects of the life of the Society, among which was also one on spiritual life of Jesuits. From the number of decrees on the life in the Society, it is clear that this GC played an important role in reshaping the spiritual life of the Society in general and more specifically in the way it prayed. The congregation

¹⁴⁵ Cf. GC27/D52.

¹⁴⁶ GC27/D53.

¹⁴⁷ There were 185 delegates at the GC, from all over the world, with an exception of six provinces of Eastern Europe and China. The GC lasted from 6 September until 11 November, 1957.

intended to look at the whole spectrum of how Ignatian spirituality was understood and this indeed did have a bearing on the life of the Society.

The concern of renewal of spiritual life had been going on for many years and we find a similar approach in the 30th GC where the delegates took up the issue of renewal of spirits again. This congregation dwelt on the state of the spiritual life of Jesuits and decreed that since there were many dangers that ‘threaten the spiritual life of Ours today,’ they made some provisions: “a. Superiors and subjects should be strongly reminded about these dangers and be taught the correctives to be used against them (decree 39); b. Prefects of spiritual matters should be carefully selected and trained (decree 40).”¹⁴⁸ And in this regard they again confirmed the practices and traditions that were “handed down over several centuries and confirmed by other congregations, requiring all to devote an entire hour to mental prayer each day.” The GC had the goal of gaining ‘more abundant fruit from this hour of prayer,’ and so the congregation directed the following to be called to mind:

a. Generally speaking, it is better to make one’s prayer in the morning; but if the situation of time and place seems to suggest a different schedule, the superior can allow it to be made in its entirety in the evening, or partly in the morning and partly at some other more convenient time.

b. Even though Ours are not to be obliged to assemble all in one place for prayer, still, not only is it possible that with the approval of the general, an existing contrary usage may be retained (decree 64, §3), but also, given the superior’s consent, there is nothing to prevent those who of their own accord desire to do so from making the meditation and the examination of conscience in the chapel before the Blessed Sacrament.¹⁴⁹

The Congregation also deliberated on the existing practices and proposed some changes in order to facilitate a more flexible style of prayer.¹⁵⁰

In tune with this proposal the following changes were adopted by the same Congregation, paving way for a relaxed rule in the way the prayer was to be conducted.

¹⁴⁸ GC30/D10.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ “Looking at the genuine difficulties that in some houses stand in the way of an exact observance of the rule of visiting Ours during time of prayer and examen, the congregation passed a dispositive decree modifying this law in such wise that it would be enforced by the vigilance of superiors, regulated by effective remedies directed toward execution, and adjusted to various conditions found in the houses (decree 64, §2).” GC30/D10#3.

Accordingly, though it was not obligatory to gather for prayer, the superior had the duty to ensure that the subjects faithfully followed the prescriptions regarding mental prayer and the examen.¹⁵¹ Though the GC changed the practices of common visits and adherence to mental prayer, we do not find any substantial change in the way the examen was to be practiced.

The Congregation recommended that superiors made sure of adherence of all to the two daily examens. There were other similar changes that were brought about by this GC, altering some of the practices that were initiated by Borja which we had said as being not necessarily in line with Ignatian idea of prayer.¹⁵² Perhaps most important change with regard to spiritual practices adopted by the GC was “recognizing the need for a better understanding of the spirituality of Saint Ignatius, the congregation, asked for a doctrinal and spiritual commentary on the Constitutions and for a handbook that spreads before the eyes the entire structure of our spirituality. It also mandated serious training for those who were to be in charge of spiritual matters in the Society.”¹⁵³ As a whole we find that the thirtieth GC made many small changes that would trigger further changes, especially around the Second Vatican Council.

6.9 The Examen in the General Congregations Thirty-One to Thirty-Six

Many agree that the GCs, especially in the 20th century, have brought in many significant changes to the life of the Society. Though such short span of fifty years or so may not be so significant in the overall near-five hundred years of history,¹⁵⁴ yet they call our attention, especially against the backdrop of the Vatican Council II ushering in major changes. In our attempt to study the history of the daily examen we can consider these GCs

¹⁵¹ Cf. GC30/D64, especially #2, 3.

¹⁵² Many of them have to do with the continual practice of recital of litany. For more on this see GC30/D10.

¹⁵³ Padberg, *For Matters*, p. 58.

¹⁵⁴ Padberg comments about the GC 31 to GC 33: “in the history of the Society of Jesus, thirty or thirty-five years in and of themselves are not a long period of time. Yet perhaps only the thirty-five years and three general congregations during the generalate of Claudio Aquaviva from 1581 to 1615 have equalled in intensity and change the thirty years that have characterized the last three general congregations [...]” This same can be extended to the last five GCs as well. See John W. Padberg, *Together as a Companionship: A History of the Thirty-First, Thirty-Second, and Thirty-Third General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1994, p. vii.

– the post-Vatican II General Congregations – as important sources to turn to, so as to see the *aggiornamento* brought in by the Council in the Society of Jesus. We take a close look at the decrees of these GCs to study if and how the daily examen is treated, with a view to further study the changing focus of overall spirituality in the Society of Jesus.

6.9.1 Thirty-First General Congregation

The 31st General Congregation took place when the Vatican Council II was still in session and in many ways this GC is termed as a response to the invitation of the Council Fathers. For the first time in the history of the Society the GC was held in two sessions,¹⁵⁵ precisely to address the concerns raised at the Vatican Council and therefore the decrees indeed bear the mark of Vatican II. Among the nineteen hundred *postulata* received for the GC, one hundred and sixty were on spiritual formation of Jesuits while another three hundred were on training of scholastics.¹⁵⁶ It was the Commission on Religious Life that had dealt with spiritual life in the Society and drafted the decree, and it gave importance to personal prayer while also emphasising the importance of tertianship in overall formation.¹⁵⁷ Against this backdrop can we better situate what the GC talked about personal prayer and the daily examen. This GC revised the traditional full-hour of prayer – an hour of prayer made mandatory in the 4th GC in 1581, as we have seen earlier – and the GC wished to go back in principle to the norms set by Ignatius, while also emphasizing the great importance and fruitfulness of personal prayer.

The General Congregation wishes to remind every Jesuit that personal daily prayer is an absolute necessity. But the Congregation, recognizing the value of current developments in the spiritual life, does not intend to impose upon all indiscriminately a precisely defined universal norm for the manner and length of prayer. Our rule of an hour's prayer is therefore to be adapted so that each Jesuit, guided by his superior, takes into account his

¹⁵⁵ The first session started from May 7 to July 15 of 1965 with 224 members and the second session with 226 members started on the 8 September and concluded on 17 November, 1966. See Padberg, *Together*, p.1.

¹⁵⁶ See Padberg, *Together*, pp.3, 11.

¹⁵⁷ The decrees under the category religious life talk about Religious Life in General, Prayer, Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Chastity in the Society of Jesus, The Life of Obedience, Poverty, Community Life and Religious Discipline and Reading at table. The wide variety of themes indicate the eagerness of the delegates to respond to the Vatican Council.

particular circumstances and needs, in the light of that discerning love which St. Ignatius clearly presupposed in the Constitutions.¹⁵⁸

Thus, the great focus of 31st GC was undoubtedly on personal prayer, with individuals having much freedom to choose how to do that.¹⁵⁹ Within this context, the practice of the examen had an important role to play.

6.9.1.1 The Examen and Spiritual Life of Jesuits

The GC clearly envisioned the examen as an important aspect in the spiritual life of Jesuits, a practice that was to be inculcated from the early stages formation. Emphasizing the centrality of the *Spiritual Exercises* in the formation of the novices, the GC says,

education towards familiarity with God in prayer should be carried out in the apostolic atmosphere of the Exercises. The daily exercises of piety should tend to arouse personal love for Christ and teach the seeking of familiar communion with God in all things. Care should also be taken that the novices clearly understand how the different means presented in the Constitutions themselves (examinations of conscience, prayer, meditation, reading . . . [277]) serve to complement one another. These modes of prayer ought to be nourished by assiduous reading of Sacred Scripture and participation in the sacred liturgy.¹⁶⁰

Here the decree talks about how the Scholastics' spiritual formation should be after the novitiate and it includes the daily practice of the examen.

With regard to the spiritual life of formed scholastics and apostolic communities, the GC prescribes an hour of personal prayer, as we have seen already, in order that each Jesuit becomes spiritual persons who have advanced in the way of Christ our Lord.¹⁶¹ While recommending common time for prayer, the GC in no ambiguous terms spells out the importance of the examen for a mature interior life:

¹⁵⁸ GC 31/D.14#11. (The text of the decrees of GCs 31-35 are taken from the English translation by John W. Padberg, *Jesuit Life and Mission Today: The Decrees of the 31st – 35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009).

¹⁵⁹ Analysing the historical backgrounds of the GC Padberg says, “the decree as a whole does not at all make prayer of less account in the life of the Jesuit; as a matter of fact, it places still greater emphasis upon it, making it quite explicit recommendations in certain circumstances regarding time and length and type of prayer, for example, in liturgical celebrations.” Padberg, *Together*, p. 13.

¹⁶⁰ GC 31/D8 #16.

¹⁶¹ See GC 31/D 14#11.

to foster this growth, the Society retains the practice of an hour and a half as the time for prayer, Mass, and thanksgiving. Each man should be guided by his spiritual father as he seeks that form of prayer in which he can best advance in the Lord. [...] In the communities in which they live, [...] the daily order should always indicate clearly a portion of the day fixed [...] The exercise of prayer known as examination of conscience, aptly designated by St. Ignatius to develop purity of heart, spiritual discernment, and union with God in the active life, should be made twice daily. The Society, following its approved tradition, recommends that it last a quarter of an hour.¹⁶²

We clearly see that this is in continuation with the earlier GCs that we have already seen.

6.9.1.2 Observations

It is more than clear that the focus of the decrees of GC 31 was clearly renewal, in line with the Council. The predominant vocabulary of the decrees on religious life in general and life in the Society in particular has been one of spiritual discernment. The concern of better formation and deeper union in prayer is clearly visible and the examen is proposed to this very end. Along with the usual prayer, the daily examen is also presented as a way to purify the heart and to discern in order to be united with God. Reaffirming the role of abnegation and self-denial, the GC says that it helps in shedding personal inclinations because abnegation itself prepares the way for prayer.¹⁶³ In this regard the GC points out the importance of frequent sacrament of penance, but the examen is not proposed as a moralistic exercise; and when it says “progress in prayer is possible for those alone who continually try to put off their misguided affections to ready themselves to receive the light and grace of God”¹⁶⁴ it points more to the discerning aspect of prayer where the concern is not so much sin. Therefore, it is apt to say that the examen as proposed in the decrees of GC 31 is one of spiritual discernment.

6.9.2 The Thirty-Second General Congregation

The Thirty-Second GC was formally announced by the then General, Pedro Arrupe, on September 8, 1973, seven years after the previous GC, to consider all the changes in the Church and in the Society since the Second Vatican Council. The GC officially opened in

¹⁶² GC 31/D 14# 12, 13.

¹⁶³ See GC 31/D14#8.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

December 1974, with 236 members, after almost three years of preparations¹⁶⁵ dealing with more than one thousand *postulata*. Right from the beginning the focus was on the attitude of spiritual discernment and prayer to be employed in the congregation¹⁶⁶ be it for the mission, in choosing the apostolates or in the way Jesuits lived.

The major focus of the GC 32 was clearly on the apostolates, since the Society exists not for itself but for the service of the Lord and the Church. The Congregation chose to reflect not on particular areas of apostolate but on the criteria, the style or the manner and the form of apostolic involvement,¹⁶⁷ and this was to come from the *Spiritual Exercises*.¹⁶⁸ And therefore, what the GC talked about the examen was from an apostolic point of view.

Moreover, let us not forget that while our world poses obstacles in the way of our search for union with God in Christ, it also offers suggestions for surmounting those obstacles, which we should submit to an Ignatian discernment of spirits in order to determine where in them the Spirit of God is moving us. There is, for instance, the contemporary stress on spontaneous prayer, with a minimum of formalism. There is the interest in, and understanding of, the different approaches to union with God developed by the non-Christian religions. There are the various forms of prayer in community which lead to a mutually enriching exchange of faith experiences. There is, finally, the remarkable renewal taking place today in the giving and the making of the *Spiritual Exercises*, whose vivifying influence extends beyond the limits of the formal retreat into the daily life of prayer.¹⁶⁹

Further, in the context of the union of minds and hearts to which the GC called all the Jesuits, spiritual life and life in community were of great importance. Union with God in Christ was essential as from this flowed the brotherly communion with one another (GC 32/D11#7) and for this personal prayer was absolute necessity as a source of energy for apostolic action. The decree emphasized the importance of the Eucharistic celebration and other sacraments, mainly at community levels. As the decree visualized, the examen is also a means to evaluate the apostolic fidelity of the community: “Certain features of our

¹⁶⁵ Though the GC was announced in 1973 the preparations had already begun as early as 1971, with the general setting up six-member commission and the general meeting all the provincials all over the world. See Padberg, *Together*, pp. 31-32.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Historical Preface n. 2 of GC 32.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Historical Preface n. 11 of GC 32.

¹⁶⁸ See GC 32/D11#11: “Not only that; fidelity to the Exercises energizes our apostolic action. It enlarges our inner freedom to respond readily to the demands which the service of faith may make of us. It deepens in us the self-abnegation that unites us to Christ crucified [...] the *Spiritual Exercises*, in which as Jesuits we especially experience Christ and respond to his call, lie at the heart of our Jesuit vocation [...]”

¹⁶⁹ GC 32/D11#10.

Ignatian heritage can be given a communitarian dimension; provided, of course, the personal practice for which they were originally intended is not abandoned. For instance, the examination of conscience could, at times, be made a shared reflection on the community's fidelity to its apostolic mission."¹⁷⁰

As the decree on the Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice pointed out, the whole process of examination of the state of the Society in particular and of the Church at large, what then required was not some research program but more "a process of reflection and evaluation inspired by the Ignatian tradition of spiritual discernment, in which the primary stress is on prayer and the effort to attain "indifference," that is, an apostolic readiness for anything."¹⁷¹ Such an honest evaluation and apostolic discernment demands purification of motivations, and therefore, the examen played an important role in this process: "Our entire apostolic life should be examined with the spiritual discernment proper to the Exercises, so that we might increasingly put into practice what God expects of us and purify the motivation of our lives. One means available to us is the daily examination of conscience, which was recommended by St. Ignatius so that we might be continually guided by the practice of spiritual discernment."¹⁷²

6.9.2.1 Observations

The GC 32 focused on the integration of the religious and apostolic aspects of Jesuit life and in order to achieve this goal the decrees envisioned faithfulness to the Ignatian tradition – living out the discernment of spirits and a faithfulness to the *Spiritual Exercises*. The decree on Union of Minds and Hearts put forward the necessity of regaining the familiarity with God, for which the examen is a means: "it is crucial for us somehow to regain that continual familiarity with God in both prayer and action which St. Ignatius considered absolutely essential to the very existence of our companionship."¹⁷³ Other than

¹⁷⁰ GC 32/D11#20.

¹⁷¹ GC 32/D4#72.

¹⁷² GC 32/D11#38.

¹⁷³ GC 32/D11# 7.

this union,¹⁷⁴ the apostolic discernment was another focus of the GC and we saw that the examen was put forward as one of the efficacious means to achieve this purpose. Though the GC talks of purification of motives, the examen proposed is clearly spiritual – “so that we might be continually guided by the practice of spiritual discernment” – and, therefore, we can say that the GC 32 proposes an examen that is more an instrument of spiritual discernment.

6.9.3 Thirty-Third General Congregation

Though the Thirty-Third GC took place under the special circumstances, after the illness of General Fr. Pedro Arrupe and the appointment of Fr. Paolo Dezza as the papal delegate, the congregation was indeed a continuation of the concerns of the previous two Congregations. The opening decree stated this clearly when it said “we have wished to verify, specify more accurately, and confirm the orientations given by General Congregations 31 and 32 in the light of the Church’s teaching and the exhortations addressed to us by recent Popes.”¹⁷⁵ Thus, the major concern of this GC that opened on 2 September, 1983 was renewal, the major focus of Vatican II. During the 54-day period of the Congregation, other than the election of Peter-Hans Kolvenbach as the new Superior General, there were discussions and decrees on poverty, life in the Spirit, mission, and formation. The 220 members gathered¹⁷⁶ dedicated much time on Life in the Spirit, as it was felt that still a deepening of spiritual life was indeed the need of the hour. This was in many ways the continuation of the concerns expressed in the previous two GCs in deepening the personal prayer in order to integrate better the spiritual life and the apostolate.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Araujo comments that by this union through prayer the GC intended to emphasize the unitive aspect of the examen, just as the First Jesuits would have lived: “de nuevo, no se puede dejar de señalar aquí un reconocimiento implícito al valor del examen espiritual cotidiano que, a pesar de no haber sido citado, a través de su dimensión unitiva, en la vida espiritual de Ignacio y de los primeros jesuitas, ha tenido un papel decisivo para conservar y actualizar armónicamente, cada día, la unión con Dios en medio de la acción apostólica.” Araujo Santos, *Mas él, examinándolo*, p. 349.

¹⁷⁵ GC 33/D1#2.

¹⁷⁶ At the beginning of the Congregation there were 220 members but by the end of GC there were only 215, due to reasons like sickness. See Padberg, *Together*, pp. 108, 124; Padberg, *Jesuit Life and*, pp. 415, 431.

¹⁷⁷ The GC felt the need to consider spiritual life as a renewal was under way, mainly based on the impulse given by the apostolic orientation of option for faith and justice, service of the poor etc. The GC decided

6.9.3.1 Apostolic Discernment and the Examen

The Thirty-Third GC talked of the examen in the context of apostolic discernment, because the GC felt in the context of renewed consciousness with regard to religious life and for which what was needed was “a spiritual doctrine at once profoundly rooted in the Gospel and our tradition and yet one which responds to the challenges of our times. This renewal manifests itself especially in the new impetus given to the *Spiritual Exercises* and to apostolic discernment. The commitment to faith and to justice, the service to the poor, and especially the willingness to share their life, have been an invitation to the whole Society to embrace a more evangelical way of life.”¹⁷⁸ Precisely for such a renewal what was visualized as an effective means was the examen: “If we are to hear and respond to the call of God in this kind of world, then we must have a discerning attitude. For us Jesuits the way of discernment involves: the examination of conscience, prayer and brotherly dialogue within our communities, and the openness to superiors that facilitates obedience.”¹⁷⁹

The decree also talked of an examination of the style of life and ministries of the entire Society. Though this examen is one of reviewing or evaluating the existing ministries and the life in the communities, we can see that there are certain elements of the daily examen involved – an evaluation of availability and indifference of each individual Jesuit.¹⁸⁰

to insist on the integration of spiritual life and apostolate where personal prayer was again crucial. Cf. GC 33/D1#9ff., Padberg, *Together*, pp. 119-120.

¹⁷⁸ GC 33/D1#10.

¹⁷⁹ GC 33/D1#12.

¹⁸⁰ “If we are to fulfill our mission, we must be faithful to that practice of communal apostolic discernment so central to “our way of proceeding,” a practice rooted in the Exercises and Constitutions. This way of proceeding calls for a review of all our ministries, both traditional and new. Such a review includes: an attentiveness to the Word of God; an examen and reflection inspired by the Ignatian tradition; a personal and communitarian conversion necessary in order to become “contemplatives in action”; an effort to live an indifference and availability that will enable us to find God in all things; and a transformation of our habitual patterns of thought through a constant interplay of experience, reflection, and action.” GC 33/D1#39-40.

6.9.3.2 Observations

This Congregation talked of the importance of the examen in the larger context of the review of ministries and renewal of religious life in the light of the invitation by the Vatican Council II. The decrees talked about the importance of apostolic discernment and the examen is cited as one of the ways in which this could be achieved. By referring to the examen as a means to respond to the call of God through discernment the GC affirmed the role of the examen in this process. Thus, it is clear that when the GC says for Jesuits the way of discernment involves the examination of conscience, the Thirty-Third GC clearly considers this daily exercise as spiritual examen.

6.9.4 Thirty-Fourth General Congregation

The 34th GC opened on 5 January, 1995 and concluded its sessions on 22 March of the same year. The remote preparations had already begun in 1992 and the GC had been officially convoked in September of 1993.¹⁸¹ The overall thrust of the GC was revising the laws of the Society for better efficiency in the changing circumstances. The major themes of the GC were Our Mission Today and Jesuit Identity under which themes like aspects of Jesuit life for mission, context of Jesuit Mission, characteristics of Our Way of Proceeding were discussed. This focus clearly points to the direction of the importance of prayer and personal renewal again, and therefore what the decrees talk about the examen would be of interest to our study.

6.9.4.1 Familiarity with God and the Examen

The decree on Chastity, while talking about familiarity with God and friendship with Christ as the heart of Jesuit vocation, spelt out the examen and discernment among others as moments of finding the presence of God. This is presented as Normative Principles and Guidelines within the decree on chastity to highlight the great significance of it in the Society.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Padberg, *Jesuit Life and*, pp. 499ff.

This should be a principal concern of all Jesuits: to seek the conscious presence of the Lord in such private prayer as meditation, contemplation, and the examination of conscience and in such community prayer as the Liturgy of the Hours, communal discernment, and group spontaneous prayer. In their manifold occupations, Jesuits can learn to reverence the divine presence as the horizon in which they live, to apprehend the immanent providence of God that draws them into its own working for the salvation of human beings, and to hold on to God as the purpose that energizes their work—learning thus to find God in all things. The celebration of the Eucharist—frequently together as a community—ought to be central to such a life, and the sacrament of reconciliation ought to exercise a significant influence over it. Annually they are to commit themselves conscientiously to making the Spiritual Exercises. All of these components of Jesuit life flow from the fundamental directive of the Formula of the Institute: Let the one who wishes to live our life “take care, as long as he lives, first of all, to keep before his eyes God.”¹⁸²

Secondly, the examen is proposed as an instrument to grow in critical awareness of the negative influence of the world with regard to the vow of chastity. Affirming that self-discipline and discernment are absolutely necessary to keep fidelity with regard to this vow, the congregation pointed out the danger of exploitation of our sensibilities by the media.¹⁸³ The practice of daily examen, along with other moments of personal prayer, help Jesuits to grow in critical awareness of the temptations and desires, in order that, with the help of abnegation and self-discipline, they can grow in affective maturity. The decree observed,

religious discretion is appropriately brought to bear on every element in Jesuit life, and this entails the practice of the examination of conscience, mortification, and custody of the senses. Concretely, a Jesuit ought to weigh the influences he admits into his life through entertainment, television, videos, reading, recreation, and travel as well as through personal relationships. To live an integral life, one must ask realistically whether this or that particular influence or practice strengthens or weakens a life of fidelity in chastity and its public witness. Furthermore, a Jesuit should not be ashamed to honestly notice the temptations and desires that would prompt him to behavior incongruent with his commitments. Instead, he ought to seek help in dealing with these desires and inclinations.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² GC 34/D8#19.

¹⁸³ “Discernment and self-discipline are imperative for fidelity in chastity. Contemporary popular culture is heavily influenced by commercial propaganda, advertising, and the lucrative exploitation of sexual sensibilities for financial gain. Excessive passive entertainment can become addictive and debilitating. In this area, a Jesuit must be critically aware. [...] a certain sober realism, discernment, and abnegation are necessary [...] and Jesuits can learn much from these spiritual masters (¿quiénes son?) to discipline and integrate the body and the mind into a life of prayer and service.” GC 34/D8#28.

¹⁸⁴ GC 34/D8#29.

Here we notice the examen having an evaluative and awareness-creating role and as a help in noticing the desires that prompt a particular behaviour.

In the opening decree on Being United with Christ on Mission there is allusion to the practice of the examen when it talked of continual renewal and reorientation. It understood this renewal as “[...] the pilgrimage of the Constitutions from the first inquiry about the Society in the General Examen to the mature acceptance of responsibility for the Society in Parts V–X; it is in the personal examen of his own life where each Jesuit finds his own pathway to God, [...]”¹⁸⁵ The decree on Poverty also recommended the use of examen to evaluate¹⁸⁶ if one were really living a life of simplicity. And it recommends personal and communitarian discernment and examen to choose a simple life style.

Spiritual discernment will make us “vigilant servants” regarding the evangelical quality of our lives. The personal discernment so recommended by St. Ignatius can be practiced in prayer and the examen. Only the intimate knowledge of the Lord who has given up all for our sake will enable us to love him more deeply and follow him more closely in his detachment. The examen will help us to notice God’s footprints in our lives, the God who calls us daily to dedicate ourselves “more” freely, since he himself desires to give himself “more,” “to give himself to us as much as possible.”¹⁸⁷

Similarly, in the decree on Thinking with the Church, there is again reference to the examen as a means to discern the role of the Society in the mission of the Church:

this congregation makes its own the teaching of Father General’s address and recommends it to the whole Society for attentive study in an atmosphere of prayer, examen, and individual and communal reflection and discernment. In accord with GC 33, Father General affirms that the Society must “seek to incorporate itself more and more vigorously and creatively into the life of the Church,” and “learn in the Church, with the Church, and for the Church how to live our faith as adults in the conditions, cultures, and languages of this end of the century.”¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ GC34/D1#5.

¹⁸⁶ “Our manner of life personally and in communities has to be simple, hospitable, and open. There are certainly Jesuits and communities which live an exemplary, austere life. However, we must admit that in some instances the style of our life is far from that lived by modest families of the locale. We must sincerely examine whether in certain spheres (travel, personal cars, private use of television, meals in expensive restaurants, vacations, the number of domestic employees, and so forth) we live according to the requirements of our poverty; we must also ask whether we truly earn our livelihood by our labor.” Here the decree (D9/#8) talks more of an evaluation and not so much of a daily examen, but this is indeed related to the sections that follows, about the need for discernment about the quality of life.

¹⁸⁷ GC 34/D9#10, 11.

¹⁸⁸ GC 34/D11#19.

In his address to the Congregation at its closing, Fr. General also talked about the role of examen in revealing the presence of God in the daily life of Jesuits:

[...] Why try to delude ourselves? It is conversion or the absence of conversion which is the deciding factor for the living-out of this congregation, for the future of all that this general congregation has elaborated, clarified, and decided. That the general congregation was able to appeal to this conversion of heart by means of its decrees and its norms is testimony that the grace of holiness has not been abandoned, even if our examen has revealed that we carry this grace in very fragile vessels of clay.¹⁸⁹

Thus, a close look at the whole GC would reveal that the permeating atmosphere with regard to prayer and renewal was one of discernment.

6.9.4.2 Observations

The 34th GC thus clearly mentions the examen as a practice of spiritual discernment, be it in living an authentic chaste life or it in living a life of poverty. The decrees have dealt on the very practical aspect of self-discipline and discernment realized through the practice of personal prayer and daily examen. By asking all the Jesuits to indeed examine the lives – in the light of the renewal initiated by the Vatican Council II – the focus is truly on discerning the presence of God in all the horizons of all their apostolates. Thus, we can conclude that this GC clearly talked about a spiritual examen.

6.9.5 Thirty-Fifth General Congregation

The Thirty-Fifth GC began on 7 January, 2008, with the objective of electing a new general and to orient the whole Society with new initiatives. This GC elected Fr. Adolfo Nicolás as the new general on 19 January and discussed and deliberated on themes relevant to the modern world like challenges to universal mission, governance structures, obedience, etc. This GC, with 217 delegates,¹⁹⁰ sought to bring in new zeal and vigour to the Society and reiterated the only desire of the Society as the service of God. The GC came to a formal conclusion on 6 March, 2008.

¹⁸⁹ Homily of Fr. General at the closing of GC 34, on 22 March, 1995. Cf. Padberg, *Jesuit Life and*, p. 694.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Padberg, *Jesuit Life and*, p. 715.

Unlike the previous GCs this present one hardly gives importance to the examen. Yet, the opening decree of 35 GC mentions the examen in the following way:

recalling the Examen and asking the Lord for the grace of conversion, we ask each of our companions to examine his own way of living and working at “the new frontiers of our time.” This examination will include the following: the demands of our mission “among the poor and with the poor”; our commitment to the ministry of the Spiritual Exercises; our concern for the human and Christian formation of a complete cross section of individuals; [...] Each Jesuit is invited to acknowledge humbly his mistakes and faults, to ask the Lord’s grace to help him live his mission and, if necessary, the grace of forgiveness.¹⁹¹

The decree, *With Renewed Vigor and Zeal* – a response to the invitation of the Holy Father – acknowledges the need for conversion and deepening of a sense of service: “our effort to be completely honest with ourselves and with the Lord included much of the dynamic of the First Week of the *Spiritual Exercises*: it helped us discover and recognize our weaknesses and inconsistencies, but also the depth of our desire to serve. This required that we reexamine our attitudes and our way of living.”¹⁹² The second decree also alludes to an examining, one of an evaluation of the way of life, of how faithful one has been to the prayer-service dialectic.¹⁹³

6.9.5.1 Observations

The only clear instance of examen is in the opening decree and this exhorts to an evaluation and a call for conversion. Looking at the overall orientation of the decree we can say it is more an invitation to look closely at the life style and need for conversion and change. Though the call for an evaluation and change through the practice of the examen as given in the *Spiritual Exercises* points more towards a moralistic examen the overall

¹⁹¹ GC 35, D. 1/n. 15.

¹⁹² GC 35, D. 1/n. 3.

¹⁹³ “It is necessary for us to examine ourselves critically in order to remain mindful of the need to live faithfully this polarity of prayer and service. However we cannot abandon this creative polarity, since it marks the essence of our lives as contemplatives in action, companions of Christ sent into the world. In what we do in the world there must always be a transparency to God. Our lives must provoke the questions, “who are you, that you do these things...and that you do them in this way?”” GC 35/D2#10.

spirit is one of spiritual discernment, to live the spirit of examen daily.¹⁹⁴ Thus we see that in the decrees of 35th GC there are elements of both a moralistic and spiritual examen.

6.9.6 Thirty-Sixth General Congregation and Discernment

The delegates of GC 36 discussed the role of discernment, especially in community, and in such context, they made allusions to the examen. The decree on Companions in Mission¹⁹⁵ sets forth the tone for such a process of discernment when it says,

10. In our Jesuit community life, we should leave room for encounter and sharing. This disposition helps the community become a space of truth, joy, creativity, pardon, and of seeking the will of God. Thus, community can become a place of discernment.

11. Communal discernment requires that each of us develop some basic characteristics and attitudes: availability, mobility, humility, freedom, the ability to accompany others, patience, and a willingness to listen respectfully so that we may speak the truth to each other.

12. An essential tool that can animate apostolic communal discernment is spiritual conversation. Spiritual conversation involves an exchange marked by active and receptive listening and a desire to speak of that which touches us most deeply. It tries to take account of spiritual movements, individual and communal, with the objective of choosing the path of consolation that fortifies our faith, hope and love. Spiritual conversation creates an atmosphere of trust and welcome for ourselves and others. We ought not to deprive ourselves of such conversation in the community and in all other occasions for decision-making in the Society.¹⁹⁶

And, we see that the examen is cited as one among many means in such a process. Expressing concern over the apparent lack of conversion the decree exhorts

this Congregation is deeply convinced that God is calling the entire Society to a profound spiritual renewal. Ignatius reminds us that each Jesuit must “take care, as long as he lives, first of all to keep before his eyes God.” Thus, all the means that unite us directly with God should be more than ever prized and practiced: the *Spiritual Exercises*, daily prayer, the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, spiritual direction, and the Examen. We need to appropriate ever more fully the gift of the Exercises that we share with so many, especially the Ignatian family, and the *Constitutions* that animate our Society. In a

¹⁹⁴ Araujo is of the opinion that this decree also invites the Jesuits to the practice of particular examen, just like Ignatius in his times asked his companions. See Araujo, *Mas él, examinándolo*, p. 354. He also says that the decree points more to ‘the spirit of examen’: “sin embargo [...] prevalece de nuevo el deseo de reavivar en los jesuitas, principalmente, el “espíritu del examen”, como afirma el decreto 1, para que evalúen, discernan o examinen [...] temas fundamentales vinculados a la vida y misión de los jesuitas de hoy.”

¹⁹⁵ Decree 1 of GC 36 is titled “Companions in a Mission of Reconciliation and Justice.”

¹⁹⁶ GC36/D1.

world losing its sense of God, we should seek to be more deeply united with Christ in the mysteries of his life. Through the *Exercises*, we acquire the style of Jesus, his feelings, his choices.¹⁹⁷

Calling for a transforming encounter with the mercy of God, the decree leaves open the invitation to make use of means such as mentioned to a deeper experience of God. Other than such a passing reference to the examen, there is no mention of the examen in GC 36.

6.10 Observations

It would be almost unimaginable to group all these thirtysix General Congregations under a single category and we have seen that over the centuries the GCs have shifted their focus. In the context of our study we can say that GCs of the first sixty years or so were concerned with the duration of prayer where the examen was an integral part. Even when the debate was about the type of prayer and its duration, the examen had an indispensable role. Later years, we have seen that the examen does not find a mention in the decrees until the twentyseventh GC where the decrees merely gathered matters from earlier Congregations (Collected Decrees). On the contrary we see a different approach in the GCs that followed. Thus, we can group them into two sections, GCs 1-30 and GCs 31-36.

Right from the first GC the examen was an integral part of the prayer of a Jesuit and it hardly had any major change, unlike the duration of prayer. We have also seen that the GCs adopted spiritual practices that were often termed as less-Ignatian and at other times going back on some practices. The generalate of Borja indeed aided in galvanizing an-hour-of prayer policy and the subsequent congregations made minor changes, whenever they did any. With regard to the examen, most of the GCs continued to toe the line of the *Constitutions* by maintaining the twice-daily schedule. The type of examen that they advocated was the moralistic one, which insisted on the rightness or otherwise of an action based on the gravity of sinfulness involved. Thus, we can conclude that the approach of the General Congregations 1-30 has been, in general, moralistic in nature.

¹⁹⁷ GC36/D1#18.

The General Congregations 31-36 talk of the examen as integral part of the prayer life of Jesuits. The 31st GC talked about the indispensable role of personal prayer in which the daily examen occupies a central place. The 31st as well as the 32nd GCs talked about the centrality of discernment in the spiritual life of Jesuits and the importance of a familiarity with God. The decrees of these congregations envisioned that Jesuits would develop a personal relation with God in and through various prayers. This included discernment and examen other than meditations and other prayers as given in the Sp. Ex. The GC called all the Jesuits to develop a union of hearts and minds that would renew the life and works that they undertook. In the integration of religious life and apostolate – with the renewal initiated by the Vatican Council II – the role of discernment is duly emphasized by the GCs and the examen is given no insignificant role in this whole process. The apostolic discernment and familiarity with God are again placed as the central concern in 33rd and 34th GCs. The 35th GC talked of fidelity to the true vocation of Jesuits – to be involved in the mission, in the Church and this demanded an examination and evaluation of one's life and priorities. Other than the last GC, all the congregations post-Vatican Council II talk of the need for discernment in living the religious life, in choosing the mission as well as in growing in familiarity with God. As these GCs point out, the daily examen is a means and an important element of such discernment. Thus, it would not be wrong to say that in GCs 31-36 the call for renewal is clearly a call to discernment, through the practice of a spiritual examen.

7 The Daily Examen in the Letters of Fathers General Over the Centuries

It is not my present purpose, Reverend Fathers, to write to you upon the importance of the preservation of the Society and of its growth in all manner of perfection; nor shall I dwell on our bounden duty of striving to attain these ends, even, if needs be, at the cost of our lives. One point, however, I desire to recall to your mind, the very point indeed upon which these blessings in a great measure depend. It is, that superiors should be solicitous and prompt carefully to remove all kinds of obstacles, before they gain strength, and thereby prevent grave consequences in the future. We must all be convinced that no human institution, however holy, however guarded and protected, may not in time gradually fall into decay. To this truth the sad fate of many a glorious and sacred

undertaking bears witness. I therefore earnestly desire that we use our best endeavors to preserve and forward our Society.¹⁹⁸

These words of Claudio Aquaviva, one of the longest-serving General of the Jesuits, succinctly captures the concern of any General about the overall state of a religious Order. Often, General addresses the entire Society through a letter to invite to deeper reflection,¹⁹⁹ greater spiritual depth, to exhort to renew itself, etc. and over the centuries all the Generals have undertaken such a means to reach out to the entire Society.

In our effort to get to a better understanding of the type of examen that each generation visualized, we cull out those particular parts of the letters by Fathers General – from Diego Laínez in 1558 to Arturo Sosa in the present times – and analyse the type of examen they talk about. It is not that all the Generals have dealt with this theme – or that when they do all of them give it the same importance. In this section, we present chronologically what each General thought the examen should be, with the hope that we can better understand how the practice of the examen was interpreted.

7.1 Diego Laínez and Claudio Aquaviva

7.1.1 Diego Laínez on the Examen

In his letter written to those working in the missions in India Diego Laínez urged to persevere in virtues, by faithfully working on one's purgation, by being faithful to the practice of the examen, one is tested and purified in one's troubles and tribulations and by faithful examen one can grow in greater consolation.²⁰⁰ Laínez points out the importance of sustaining the spirit of the Society through prayers and he encourages those working in

¹⁹⁸ Claudio Aquaviva, "A letter of Very Rev. Father Claude Acquaviva to the Provincials of the Society, on some of the means of securing its preservation," in AA. VV. *Select Letters of Fathers General*, Woodstock College, 1900, p. 27.

¹⁹⁹ "La CJ ha dado siempre una gran importancia a la observancia de las r., uniéndola siempre a la de las Constituciones. Se la daba Ignacio en las Constituciones [Co 424.547.602.746.790.826] inculcándola repetidamente y llegando a prescribir que "algunas veces entre año todos rueguen al Superior les mande dar penitencias por la falta de observar las Reglas, porque ese cuidado muestre el que se tiene de aprovechar en el divino servicio" [Co 291]. Y se ha seguido dando después. Es un lugar común de las exhortaciones de los Prepósitos Generales en sus cartas a toda la CJ." Valero, "Reglas," in *DEI*, p. 1548.

²⁰⁰ Cf. AA. VV. *Epistolae Propositorum Generalium ad Patres et Fratres Societatis Iesu* vol. I, Antwerp, p. 47.

difficult missions to be faithful to the practice of the examen even when other long meditations are not possible due to external circumstances. Even when the physical fatigue and other pressing missionary activities interrupt mental prayers Laínez believes that adherence to the substantial of the Institute, especially to the examen, can preserve the true spirit in the members of the Society.²⁰¹ Laínez regards the practice of examen as an effective means to remove one's defects and he holds the spiritual progress that is possible through such practice in high esteem.²⁰²

Since what Laínez talks is of an examen that help people to remove their defect we can term it as moralistic examen and the context of the removal of tribulations affirm that he prescribes a moralistic examen.

7.1.2 Claudio Aquaviva

We have seen that the generalate of Aquaviva is considered as one of the most important period of consolidation of the Society and the concerns of the General reveal such preoccupations. We analyse here some of his letters that address the problems faced by the universal Society then and the possible remedies that he proposed to deal with such a scenario, in order to situate the type of examen that the General proposes.

7.1.2.1 The Examen as the Remedy for the Diseases of the Soul

Aquaviva, in his letter addressed to all the Fathers and Brothers of the Society²⁰³ written in April of 1600, talks of the need for renewal of the spirit in the Society after removing the many ailments that affect the soul. This letter, written after consulting all the provincials regarding the need for renewal, offers instructions that would facilitate better governance, and this comes from the conviction that there is greater danger if the ailing

²⁰¹ Cf. *ibid.* p. 48.

²⁰² While conceding that the intellectual training is important Laínez condemns those who neglect spiritual progress for the sake of intellectual advancement. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

²⁰³ The letter titled *Industriae pro Superioribus eiusdem Societatis ad Curandos Animae Morbos*, talks of a series of sickness of the soul and their possible cures. See *Institutum* vol. I pp. 395-440. We use the Italian translation titled *Accorgimenti per curare le malattie dell'anima* from *Ignaziana*, "Classic Texts of Ignatian Spirituality," (2007) pp. 1-52.

soul is left unattended.²⁰⁴ This document, primarily to serve as guiding documents for the provincials, offered a detailed analysis and examination of the diseases that affected the Society and proposed their remedies – spiritual cure for the afflicted soul. And among the many practices aimed to correct such diseases the daily examen occupies a prominent role and we analyse them here.

Among the many things necessary for such a cure of spiritual ailments the first is a continual action and vigilance: since the sick person is not aware of his sickness and does not easily accept corrections there is a greater need to become conscience of the errors as well as to accept suggestions by superiors.²⁰⁵ Therefore Aquaviva visualizes that, before all else, the superiors themselves would examen their actions:

ma prima di intraprendere la cura, il Superiore osservi ed esami attentamente la natura del male, la struttura del corpo e, come dice san Gregorio, il temperamento: se è sanguigno e ilare, o melanconico e triste, o collerico e impetuoso, o lento e pigro. Consideri poi da quanto tempo dura l'infermità, quali rimedi sono stati applicati, che cosa è risultato utile e che cosa dannoso, chi tra le persone di casa può favorire la cura e chi ostacolarla, così da potersi valere di tutti questi dati. Ma prima di tutto il Superiore esami se stesso, sia per umiliarsi e operare con maggiore umiltà e soavità, sia per rendersi tale che il Signore possa servirsi di lui come di uno strumento più adatto e più comodo per ottenere la guarigione di un figlio. San Gregorio invita a fare questo: "Consideriamo – dice – che noi siamo come alcuni di quelli che correggiamo, o che lo siamo stati un tempo, anche se ora per l'azione della grazia divina non lo siamo più; così facendo, con cuore umile, correggeremo con tanto maggiore moderazione, quanto più sinceramente riconosceremo noi stessi in coloro che vogliamo emendare." Questo è molto importante, sia per la qualità sia per il modo della correzione.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ The words of the then secretary of the Society: "ora però, riflettendo più a fondo sulla necessità e l'importanza di tali interventi, e rilevando che i singoli Superiori non riescono a conseguire un'adeguata esperienza e conoscenza, specialmente per i frequenti cambiamenti che ora si devono fare ogni tre anni, ha ritenuto conveniente, e quasi indispensabile, redigere una trattazione specifica. È certo infatti che in nessun'altra arte si commettono errori con maggior pericolo e con più grave danno degli altri, che nell'arte di curare le anime." Aquaviva, *Accorgimenti per curare*, p. 2.

²⁰⁵ "Nelle malattie del corpo è soprattutto il paziente che conosce e percepisce il male, desidera guarire, chiama il medico e non rifiuta alcun rimedio, per quanto amaro e sgradevole, pur di recuperare la salute. Invece nelle malattie dell'anima avviene il contrario: l'infermo non riconosce il suo male, rifiuta il medico e difficilmente accetta la cura. Perciò il primo passo della cura è fargli prendere coscienza del suo male. Bisogna anzitutto convincerlo, come insegna san Basilio, che i medici esperti riconoscono certi indizi di malattie nascoste che spesso sfuggono ad altri e all'infermo stesso; perciò si deve credere a lui, anche perché l'orgoglio e l'amor proprio sono un forte ostacolo ad ammettere la propria infermità." *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

Aquaviva points out that a strong aversion to the rules of the Institute and a dislike for some aspects of religious life lead people away from the perfection that they seek and this, he thinks, can be addressed by a thorough examination of conscience. He observes,

il religioso esamini le radici da cui nasce il suo malcontento, e troverà che in qualche caso questo dipende da un'errata comprensione. Bisogna chiarire i vari punti e allontanare le tenebre, che presto svaniranno. Per qualcuno si tratterà di orgoglio: ad esempio, non approva la diversità dei gradi, perché vuol essere Professo; o la manifestazione della coscienza, perché vuol rimanere nascosto; o la denuncia di altri, perché non vuol perdere la propria fama. Consideri i singoli punti e giudichi se stesso osservando le cause del suo malcontento. Rifletta pure che, se rimangono le radici dell'inquietudine [...]. Perciò non sono in questione i punti dell'Istituto che non piacciono: la radice è all'interno; se si risana questa, tutto sarà salvo. Alcuni, che nel turbamento disapprovavano molti di quei punti ma poi nel raccoglimento li hanno chiariti, hanno perseverato serenamente fino alla fine.²⁰⁷

He opines that the unhappiness comes not from some rules of the Institute but rather from within oneself and through reflection and examination one finds out the cause of the particular disease of the soul.²⁰⁸

Talking about the ways in which the superior needs to correct the subjects, Aquaviva reminds the importance of dealing firmly yet in a gentle manner.²⁰⁹ And in such a manner of dealing, the superior does not force nor be too lenient²¹⁰ but the correction has

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 37.

²⁰⁸ Aquaviva talks of diseases that affect individuals and asks the entire community, first of all, to pray for such persons and then the superior helps such person to see his own problems through prayer and examen. The role of the superior is to make the person aware of his faults as well as to help him correct them. "Prima di tutto bisogna ordinare alla comunità di pregare per lui, come per uno che sia affetto da una grave e pericolosa malattia; poi si deve intraprendere la cura con molta attenzione. Si inviti anzitutto il religioso a manifestarsi con franchezza al Superiore, dicendo su quali punti dell'Istituto sente la tentazione; se questa dura da molto tempo; in quale occasione è sorta; per quali eventi si è aggravata; se ha comunicato i suoi dubbi a qualcuno, specialmente al Superiore, e se gli ha dato ascolto; non esiti infine a indicare sinceramente i punti che ora lo angustiano di più [...]. Quando manifesterà il suo male, indicherà forse qualcuno dei punti su cui alcuni sono in disaccordo: la distinzione dei gradi, il ritardo della professione, l'ampia autorità dei Superiori, il rendiconto di coscienza, la manifestazione di difetti e di errori da parte di chi viene a conoscerli fuori della confessione. Allora il Superiore lo affronti, ponendogli sotto gli occhi la gravità del male, perché comprenda che, se non si cura diligentemente, non sarà mai tranquillo in Compagnia né potrà perseverare in essa, [...]." Ibid., p. 36.

²⁰⁹ "Il modo di esercitare l'autorità – specialmente su coloro che si sono offerti come sacrificio volontario a Dio, e che spontaneamente e con ardore, attraverso la pratica della mortificazione e della rinuncia, si lasciano guidare e spronare alla piena perfezione – dev'essere forte e soave: non solo lo afferma la costante autorità dei santi Padri, ma lo insegnano ampiamente anche le nostre Costituzioni e i consigli e gli esempi dei nostri beati Padri." Ibid., p. 9.

²¹⁰ "D'altra parte, il Superiore non deve consentire che i sudditi cerchino l'impunità, facendo ciò che vogliono e non facendo ciò che non vogliono, assecondando le proprie inclinazioni, pensando e agendo

to emerge from within the person through the practice of the examen: “sesto, se si sa attendere con pazienza di ottenere domani dal suddito quello che non si può ottenere oggi, tenendo sempre presente il fine e usando bene i mezzi: infatti quello che il suddito non può dare ora per la sua povertà di spirito, lo darà in modo facile ed efficace se imparerà a esaminare se stesso e se diventerà uomo spirituale.”²¹¹ Thus, we see that Aquaviva visualizes a more personal role for the examen to become spiritual person.

In the same line, the practice of the examen can serve to find out the cause of distractions in prayer in so far as they reveal the weakness of the person:

è necessario indagare attentamente sull’aridità ed esaminarne i diversi aspetti, per applicare il rimedio adatto a ogni forma di questo male. Prima di tutto bisogna esaminare se l’aridità è continua o saltuaria, e in questo caso se dura per molto tempo o per poco; se si manifesta soltanto nell’orazione del mattino o anche nelle altre pratiche spirituali ed è quasi costante. Bisogna poi vedere da dove proviene, e valutare da che cosa nascono le distrazioni: se da una naturale instabilità e incostanza, che non lascia stare tranquillo; o dai desideri e da un affetto disordinato verso qualche oggetto che spesso ritorna, inquieta l’animo e attira a sé la mente in modo fastidioso; o da un’occasione momentanea sorta all’improvviso; o dalla scarsità della materia per l’orazione, così che la mente non ricevendo alimento divaga da ogni parte; o dalla negligente custodia dei sensi, per cui nascono immagini vane; o da oziosità, frivolezza, volgarità e da simili difetti che spingono l’animo verso le cose esteriori e lo rendono superficiale e in qualche modo infantile; o da un’attività eccessiva che quasi soffoca lo spirito; o infine da una prova prolungata o dalla mancanza di visite del Signore.²¹²

Here the examen has the role of finding out the possible cause of the problem affecting the individual. Pointing out that the reasons for such an aridity and dryness in prayer could vary from distractions, natural instability, scarcity of material or poor preparation for prayer or even from disordered attachments.²¹³ In such situations, it is the examen that helps one to find out the real cause, which clearly indicate the role of the daily examen. Aquaviva says, “se l’aridità dipende dalla negligente custodia dei sensi, bisogna essere più attenti su

abituamente contro i giudizi e gli ordini del Superiore [...]. Perciò il Superiore, quando agisce così, non creda di essere mite nel governo, ma indolente e debole; e quando è aspro, non creda di essere zelante custode della disciplina.” Ibid., p. 11.

²¹¹ Ibid., p. 12.

²¹² Ibid., p. 13.

²¹³ For the possible causes that Aquaviva lists, see *ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

questo punto, esaminarsi più accuratamente, evitare tutto ciò che può fare del male”²¹⁴ and therefore the need to prepare beforehand.

Aquaviva reminds that one who is internally dry and unhappy will easily look for consolation outside and therefore need to be attentive to such distractions. A person who is distracted with the affairs of the world outside will need to fall back onto the examen to maintain the interior recollection and prayerful nature.

Chi si trova in tale condizione dev’essere impegnato per obbedienza in attività utili e pie; bisogna tenerlo a freno perché non divaghi e non si disperda in altre occupazioni: infatti è segno di prudenza sfruttare a buon fine le doti delle persone. Bisogna poi consigliargli di interrompere ogni tanto la sua attività; se non può fare altro, si riposi nella sua stanza, dedicandosi a una lettura spirituale, o recitando i salmi o il rosario, o esaminando la sua coscienza, per essere completamente distolto dalle cose esteriori. Bisogna ancora esortarlo a rinnovare spesso la retta intenzione, a considerare i suoi difetti, in particolare quelli che sono più comuni in tali soggetti, come la loquacità, la curiosità, l’impazienza, i discorsi frivoli, l’adulazione, la vanità, la mormorazione, i giudizi sul prossimo e altri di questo genere.²¹⁵

Falling back on to the spiritual resources like examen helps a religious deal with such dryness and temptations. For Aquaviva, these spiritual practices help one to have discipline and control over oneself and so can deal with temptations²¹⁶ to look for comforts outside: “eliminate queste occasioni contrarie, incominci a stare più raccolto, faccia brevi ma frequenti esami di coscienza, sia presente a se stesso, elevi la mente a Dio e dica umilmente come con un solo sospiro; “Vedi, Signore, la mia miseria e la mia pena.”²¹⁷

Another role of the examen is to deal with pride and other personal sins that hinder the progress of the persons in the spiritual path. Aquaviva considers the desire for honour as a dangerous ailment that can cause serious damage and he considers vanity, desire for excellence with selfish motives, etc. in the same light. Other than proposing frequent prayer and meditation on the beauty of humility along with consideration on the harm that can

²¹⁴ Ibid., p. 14.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 22.

²¹⁶ “Bisogna considerare se l’effusione verso l’esterno dipende da una naturale agitazione e instabilità. In questo caso chi ne soffre, anche se dev’essere frenato e guidato, difficilmente giungerà ad essere un uomo interiore e raccolto, se non è sostenuto da una grazia particolare e se non piega la sua natura in modo energico ed efficace, dominando se stesso con atti ripetuti e vigorosi.” Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 23.

come from such sins, Aquaviva proposes the following: “quando nell’esame di coscienza scopre in sé i cattivi frutti di questa funesta radice, ricorra subito alla preghiera, rimproverandosi e dolendosi, e non attribuisca il suo difetto a un’altra causa, in particolare alla colpa di altri.”²¹⁸ According to him, along with this diligent examen some acts of humility would also bring in the desired fruits, and this indicate that the amendments proposed during the examen are to be put into practice to bear fruit.

In order to deal with another infirmity of secretiveness that affect the religious Aquaviva proposes:

chi manca di chiarezza prima di tutto dev’essere esortato a indagare ed esaminare attentamente se stesso. Infatti questa oscurità nella quale cerca di nascondersi è collegata di solito a un’oscurità interiore: così in quell’anima non appare né la chiara conoscenza di sé, né la luce nell’agire, né lo splendore delle realtà divine, ma tutto è tenebroso e confuso; perciò non si avvertono le serene mozioni delle ispirazioni e delle azioni divine, né la bellezza delle virtù senza gran nebbia e fumo, e tutto si vede con occhi offuscati.²¹⁹

Referring to the proposals of the Fathers of the Church, Aquaviva talks of the perfection that is possible when one practices the examen honestly to correct one’s faults.

Se non altro, il motivo stesso per cui si tace è malizioso e sospetto. O si è impediti dall’orgoglio, temendo di essere stimati meno se si manifesta un difetto, o si trascura di manifestarlo, pensando che basti la propria prudenza senza bisogno di alcuna guida; e questo è segno di presunzione e di superbia; oppure, avendo di mira un fine materiale, si teme che manifestando un difetto non sia possibile realizzarlo. Del resto, con un breve esame di coscienza si può trovare subito la radice di questo male.²²⁰

The General suggests that obscurity and secretiveness are easy invitation to the evil spirit, whereas an examen that brings the light of the Holy Spirit will help win the temptations when one is diligent to fight against such secretiveness.²²¹

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 24.

²¹⁹ Ibid., p. 27.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ “Sappia che nessun altro difetto più di questo apre la porta a Satana, spirito delle tenebre, il quale agisce liberamente, come vuole e senza che alcuno lo ostacoli, su questo tipo di anime, convincendole facilmente; e che nessun altro difetto più di questo chiude la porta a tutti i rimedi. Perciò aprendosi vincerà facilmente tutte le tentazioni; invece tacendo ne sarà vinto.” Ibid.

What he talks about the way in which the superior should correct the faults also underlines the importance of the examen:

quando un difetto è manifestato da altri, il soggetto dev'essere delicatamente ammonito e sollecitato, per aver consentito che un altro gli togliesse il merito di manifestarsi e gli procurasse un imbarazzo maggiore. Talvolta il Superiore gli faccia capire, sminuendo la colpa, che non c'era motivo per volerla tenere nascosta; che tacendo l'ha resa più grave; e che la timidezza e l'amor proprio fanno un gran male. Infatti la colpa manifestata si poteva sanare facilmente; divenuta più grave, richiede indagini ed esami.²²²

Aquaviva insists on the practice of the examen not only for removal of grave sins and faults that cause great embarrassment but even for the venial sins. For he says,

bisogna dunque esaminare diligentemente la propria coscienza ed evitare anche le piccole mancanze veniali, perché esse pure recano non lieve danno. A questo proposito lo stesso san Gregorio ammonisce saggiamente: “Anche gli uomini insigni non possono essere senza peccato: che cosa resta loro da fare, se non cercare ogni giorno di liberarsi dai peccati con i quali l'umana fragilità continua a macchiarli? Chi non si purifica ogni giorno dai peccati che commette, anche se le colpe che accumula sono piccole, queste a poco a poco colmano la sua anima e giustamente gli tolgono il frutto della ricchezza interiore.”²²³

Therefore, Aquaviva sees that a diligent examen done daily would purify the persons even of his venial sins and lead them closer to God.

While talking in general about ailments of religious life, Aquaviva points to weariness and tepidity in practice of virtues as another danger to spiritual life and as a result, disordered affections develop.

Esamini se questo languore e questa debolezza dipende, come nel corpo, da un eccesso di umori cattivi; in tale caso è vano il suo sforzo di eliminarli, se ha fini particolari e se ricerca se stesso. Se il languore dipende dalla mancanza di nutrimento spirituale, veda in che modo pratica i sacramenti, le meditazioni, le preghiere, gli esercizi di pietà; välti perché non ne riceve nutrimento, si esami diligentemente e si sforzi di scoprirlo. Se da queste pratiche non è ristorato, saziato, rafforzato, c'è sotto qualche difetto che bisogna attentamente ricercare e diligentemente correggere [...]. Scelga una o due virtù appropriate e si eserciti nei loro atti; se durante la giornata non si presenta alcuna occasione, almeno nell'esame di coscienza chieda a Dio quella virtù e mostri di volerla praticare.²²⁴

²²² Ibid., p. 28.

²²³ Ibid., p. 15.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 19.

Here we note that Aquaviva calls for a deeper examen to find out the cause of such spiritual ailments and in this process the particular examen also serves to get rid of specific faults that need greater attention. Here we can conclude that for Aquaviva, the examen, more than a moralistic exercise, is medication for the suffering soul; the spiritual practices have therapeutic effect on the afflicted souls. We will look at the recommendations of the General with regard to this practice in the later section.

7.1.2.2 Preservation and Renewal of the Society

Reminding all the provincials of the need to preserve the true spirit of the Society, Aquaviva exhorted them to be solicitous and prompt to remove any obstacles that may prevent the Jesuits from attaining the holiness and perfection. He visualizes the removal of obstacles and gaining of spiritual strength,²²⁵ and in order to do this the examen is prescribed, among many others, as a means. He observes that generally the condition of the head reflects upon the entire system and the inferiors are influenced by the superiors, the provincials should dedicate most their energy to the care of the subjects, i.e. “the most zealous endeavor should be to aid his subjects in the pursuit of true and solid virtues.”²²⁶

For, Aquaviva strongly believed that if a religious were “true to his calling and keenly alive to his best interests, he must acknowledge that personal sanctity is the outcome of unending and untiring work alone” and “every honest religious should feel the absolute necessity of daily renewal of spirits.”²²⁷ He considered the Holy Eucharist as the “treasury of God’s goodness” and the examen as a help to grow in virtue and holiness:

²²⁵ “It is not my present purpose, Reverend Fathers, to write to you upon the importance of the preservation of the Society and of its growth in all manner of perfection; nor shall I dwell on our bounden duty of striving to attain these ends, even, if needs be, at the cost of our lives. One point, however, I desire to recall to your mind, the very point indeed upon which these blessings in a great measure depend. It is, that superiors should be solicitous and prompt carefully to remove all kinds of obstacles, before they gain strength, and thereby prevent grave consequences in the future. We must all be convinced that no human institution, however holy, however guarded and protected, may not in time gradually fall into decay. To this truth the sad fate of many a glorious and sacred undertaking bears witness. I therefore earnestly desire that we use our best endeavors to preserve and forward our Society.” Aquaviva, “Preservation of the Society,” in *Select Letters*, p. 27.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Cf. Aquaviva, “Renewal of Spirits and Co-operation with God’s grace”, in *Select Letters*, p. 50.

what opportunities we have for acquiring untold wealth in the daily practice of virtue! What inducements urge us to reach out for perfection! What salutary incitements lie hidden in each examination of conscience! What timely reproofs come home to us in reiterated exhortations, if only we descend to the inner chambers of our soul and there listen to God explaining them in detail and working them into our very being with all His light and strength! How vigilant the eyes of our Superiors! How high and strong the barrier of our Rules!²²⁸

He points out that the lack of prayer and of faithful practice of the examen are the reasons for the tepidity and decadence, and exhorts all to look inside themselves, “to institute a diligent enquiry, and after discovering them to pluck up or at least kill these prolific sources of growth so rank and deadly.” According to him the causes of tepidity are “[...] an undying love of self, a restless war of the passions, dread of the difficulties that must be undergone to come out of the fight victorious, a longing for things that are easy and agreeable, things usually for which nature has a marked weakness, perpetual distraction of heart, abandonment of prayer, neglect of examens, and scores of like indications [...]”²²⁹

While pointing out the need for resignation and indifference in all offices, Aquaviva alludes to examination and correction of faults when he says,

ordinary and common failings, or remissness on one or two occasions may be overlooked, but should any of Ours betray signs of serious and habitual faults as, for instance, love of dignities, stubbornness of opinion, or other serious faults of this nature, suitable correctives must be used. For this purpose, if engaged in the ministry or in studies, he should be removed from these occupations and given time to consider his condition. During this self-examination he is to be advised with fatherly kindness of the gravity of his state, and asked, moreover, to devise and propose whatever plan he might himself deem most conducive to his reform. It will be well, then, to excite in him an earnest desire of correction.²³⁰

Though here the examination that is referred is more of a general examination of one’s life with regard to availability and readiness to carry out different missions, we can also see allusion to particular examen – evaluating one’s behaviour against particular faults.

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 57.

²²⁹ Ibid., p. 60.

²³⁰ Aquaviva, “Preservation of the Society,” in *Select Letters*, pp. 36-37.

7.1.2.3 The Particular Examen

Aquaviva is clear that among the many infirmities that affect the spiritual health of the person, lack of virtues occupies an important place. Among the cures proposed by Aquaviva, the traditional spiritual practices of the Society like meditation, spiritual reading, frequent communion, some spiritual exercises for a couple of days and general confession find a place.²³¹ The particular examen is given importance along with all these practices and this underlines the importance of such ascetical practice.

Esamini attentamente – e ne parli con il Superiore e con il Padre spirituale – su quale punto è maggiore la sua riluttanza e da che cosa dipende: se da orgoglio, da vanità, da pigrizia, da un attaccamento disordinato agli studi o ad altro, da un fine e da un desiderio personale. Potrà così applicare il rimedio adatto. [...] Chieda continuamente al Signore la virtù dell'obbedienza, e rivolga ad essa una speciale attenzione nell'esame sia generale sia particolare.²³²

Along with this practice, points out Aquaviva, mortification helps to strengthen the overall spiritual health of the person. It is also interesting to note that the General refers here to what Ignatius puts forth in the *Constitutions*, that one recollects himself in prayer and then leaves everything in the hands of the superior and if one cannot act likewise, at least he should have the desire for it [*Const.* 292]. He points out that the particular examen coupled with such practices would produce the desired fruits.

In another instance, Aquaviva recommends the particular examen in the following way: “infine il religioso faccia l'esame particolare su questo punto, aggiunga speciali preghiere per tale intenzione e chiedi correzioni e penitenze pubbliche. Se procederà così con costanza, non solo guarirà del suo difetto, ma diventerà anche mite, amabile e

²³¹ Aquaviva points out many useful practices for fighting the lack of interest and weakness in virtues. He says, “sia invitato a confessarsi e a comunicarsi più spesso; ma gli sia imposta una cura particolare nella preparazione, perché, se lo fa per abitudine, il male anziché diminuire si aggrava. Gli sia assegnato un tempo supplementare, ad esempio un quarto d'ora, per la meditazione o per una proficua lettura spirituale, e vi si applichi non fiaccamente ma volentieri [...]. Legga vite di Santi adatte a lui [...]. Se è ancora lontano il tempo della rinnovazione dei voti, è molto utile – dopo aver fatto gli Esercizi spirituali per alcuni giorni e la confessione generale o dall'ingresso in Compagnia o dall'inizio di questa infermità spirituale – che rinnovi in privato i suoi voti, con il desiderio di ricominciare da capo, [...]” Aquaviva, *Accorgimenti per curare*, p. 19.

²³² *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

paziente.”²³³ He also suggests that in case the ailments that afflict are anger, intolerance and dislike towards one’s own brethren the particular examen must be undertaken and Aquaviva visualizes that the superior would deal with such persons firmly so as to correct them.²³⁴

While talking about the manner in which provincials should deal with the subject who are often given to judging others Aquaviva offers the practice of particular examen as a cure when he says “usi i rimedi consueti della preghiera e dell’esame particolare, facendo qualche piccola penitenza quando cade in una lieve mancanza di questo genere.” This practice, he suggests, should be done along with fraternal corrections for greater effectiveness. And again, against the fault of creating discord by gossip the examen is to be practiced, carefully looking at the root of the problem in the person concerned.

Ricorra seriamente all’esame particolare, con qualche penitenza ogni volta che cade, e con orazioni e lacrime, tenendo presente che, per quanto riguarda il rischio di cadere e il danno di altri, le tentazione di questo male sono più pericolose di quelle contro la castità; eppure per queste si prova tanta umiliazione, si cerca ogni rimedio, non si tralasciano penitenze, preghiere e la frequenza dei sacramenti; invece si scivola così facilmente sui difetti di lingua, come se non ci fosse alcun pericolo di caduta grave. Bisogna assolutamente sradicare dall’animo questo errore e prevenire diligentemente il pericolo [...]. I confessori ammoniscano seriamente i penitenti che in questa materia si può peccare gravemente. Se la diffamazione è grave, siano rinviati al Superiore, secondo la 14^a disposizione delle 22 inviate alle Province il 1 agosto 1590. Se il caso non è grave, si ammoniscano severamente e si imponga loro una penitenza, oltre all’esame particolare e ad altri rimedi. Si possono anche ammonire in privato fuori della confessione, che cerchino di evitare coloro che potrebbero indurli a commettere questa colpa.²³⁵

Thus, we can see that Aquaviva lists out various strategies as cures for the diseases that afflict persons.

²³³ Ibid., p. 31.

²³⁴ “Se uno prova antipatia verso un fratello e la cosa dura a lungo, prima di tutto bisogna ammonirlo, benevolmente ma con fermezza, facendogli capire che tale atteggiamento è indegno di un cristiano e ancora di più di un religioso, che, vivendo tra fratelli, dev’essere unito agli altri con la volontà e con il cuore. Deve riconoscere che la sua intolleranza nasce da una mancanza di umiltà, e che l’azione dell’altro da cui si ritiene offeso, non è la causa della sua agitazione, ma la manifestazione di una verità nascosta.” Ibid., pp. 28-29.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 50.

7.2 Observations

We have seen above the letters and documents through which Aquaviva urges the Jesuits to renew life and maintain the spirit of the Society and the overall tone of the letters are one of growing in perfection. In the documents, he reminds the importance of getting rid of the imperfections and faults and according to him this would be happen in and through a diligent examen. The practice of self-examination and correction of the ailments of the soul are to be achieved, among others, through the practice of the examen. It is very clear from all such instances that Aquaviva employs a moralistic examen, one that talks of getting rid of sins, of doing penances and amending the faults and blocks. In all the instances of getting to the root of the evil and correcting the faults Aquaviva sees the examen as having an important role. The vices, the faults and other ailments are removed through the practice of the examen and therefore we can say that Aquaviva talks not only of a moralistic examen but goes beyond it. When the General prescribes the examen to observe the movements and the root causes, he talks of a spiritual examen.

7.3 Mucio Vitelleschi

Mucio Vitelleschi²³⁶ in his letter to all the members on the occasion of the centenary of the Society called for self-examination and renewal in order “to maintain the vigour and manly strength-traits that must ever go with the simple candor of the child.” He wished that the Society of Jesus – an infant of a hundred years – to be devoid of any decay in any part of its body,²³⁷ and wanted it to be faithful to prayer and other means of renewal. What he wished was: “I greatly desire that we should have recourse to prayer as the chief help offered us for renewal of spirit. And first we must repair whatever defects have crept into the practice of this holy exercise. So men are wont to do, when they try to revive and bring

²³⁶ Mucio Vitelleschi was born in 1563 in Rome, entered the Society in 1583 and made his final vows in 1597. He served as the provincial of Naples and Rome before he was elected as the Assistant of Italy, and the VII GC elected him general in 1615. Cf. Mario Fois, “Vitelleschi, Mucio,” in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1621-1627, here 1621.

²³⁷ See Mucio Vitelleschi, “On the Centenary of the Society,” in *Select Letters*, pp. 87-88.

back to its former perfection an art that is well-nigh lost.”²³⁸ As a remedy for the disorders in the Society he hoped that a faithful practice of daily examen would serve its purpose:

this consideration inspires me with holy hope and with an ardent desire to see you put to profit an occasion such as this, the approach of a new century. We ought all of us to enter into ourselves and reflect seriously at this time. In the first place, we ought to examine closely all our actions, weighing them well; correcting what is wrong, making the rule our guide in everything, shaping every act by the grand models that have been left us, always keeping our high purpose in view, and ever looking to it that the splendid reputation of the Society suffers no harm at our hands.²³⁹

By calling for an overall evaluation of the life of each member, the General wished to spiritual health for all its members.

By terming the *Spiritual Exercises* a wondrous workshop Vitelleschi underlined the importance of the examen where he presented it as a perfect instrument:

there is another matter on which we should examine ourselves with no little care. Have we allowed the fire of love to grow dim in any way? Does the spirit with which we once burned, still glow within us, in brightness not unlike that with which the Society shone in the beginning? Let us look to it; and if we chance to discover that this fire languishes in us, let us hasten to revive it, and make it glow with its former brightness.²⁴⁰

When the General says, “if through any neglect, we have allowed these tools to rust and become unfit for use, let us hasten to repair them and make them bright again” he refers to the constant use of this exercise in order to prevent the decay as well as to acquire the greatness of soul and the necessary courage to the practice of such prayer.²⁴¹ By saying prayer is the greatest of all arts, and all should cultivate it, Vitelleschi refers to the rich tradition of the Society,²⁴² and sees in the examen a remedy against the danger of spiritual decay.

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 96.

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 92.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 94.

²⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 97.

²⁴² “Prayer is the greatest of all arts, and we should cultivate it all our lives; for it will be of great avail to us not only in regaining our youth and strength, but also in keeping far from us for the future the approach of spiritual old age. This is the remedy offered us against the danger of spiritual decay, and without it all other helps will be in vain. I am aware that this is no new remedy. It is an old one and well known to you. Still, circumstances will endow it with new virtue and give it fresh power to heal. The Society in our day abounds in spiritual helps of every sort ; for not to speak of our Constitutions and Rules, which, to my

Vitelleschi saw the conservation and the progress of the Society in and through prayer and practice of virtues, especially that of modesty. He believed that prayer and frequent sacraments are necessary for the wellbeing of the Society and this was to be done, among other things, in the practice of the examen, and not necessarily through any new practice.

No es mi intento ordenar cosas nuevas, ni añadir obligaciones, ni sobrecargar los hombros de mis Padres y Hermanos, sino únicamente mover cuanto me sea posible el celo de vuestra caridad proponiendo y encomendando, a la solicitud de cada uno algunas de las muchas cosas ya establecidas; de las cuales, si no me engaño, depende la conservación y aumento de la Compañía, [...].²⁴³

Citing the exhortation of Francisco de Borja, Vitelleschi says that what preserves the Society are prayer and frequent sacraments, persecutions, and perfect obedience, and therefore the need to confide more to the traditional prayers, like the daily examen.²⁴⁴

Vitelleschi called for self-examination to evaluate the cause of dwindling spirit in the Society and he called for the correction of faults. His allusion to frequent reception of sacraments and the practice of the examen as an antidote to the spiritual decay would indicate that he considers the examen as a moralistic exercise.

7.4 Francesco Piccolomini

Francesco Piccolomini²⁴⁵ in his letter to the whole Society on the utility and necessity of enforcing the Rule talks about the examen as one of the means by which ‘fresh

mind, contain a rich store of choice remedies against every kind of disorder, we have besides in our Admonitions, Ordinations, and Instructions so many safe and salutary methods of cure for all cases and occasions that may arise, that to order new remedies and give fresh prescriptions would not be to cure the sick nor preserve the health of those who are well, but would tend rather to afflict the strong and oppress those who are ill.” Ibid.

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Borja had said prayer and frequent sacraments lead one to be united with God, persecutions free one from vanity and love of the world, and perfect obedience unites Jesuits among themselves as well as with their head, the superior. See Vitelleschi, “Carta sobre oración y otras virtudes,” in *Cartas selectas de los Padres Generales*, Oña, 1917, p. 70.

²⁴⁵ Francesco Piccolomini, the 8th general of the Society, was born in 1582, had entered the Society in 1600 and was ordained after eleven years. He served as provincial of Rome, Milan, Naples, and Venecia before being elected as the general in 1649. Cf. Mario Colpo, “Piccolomini, Francisco,” in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1629-1630.

air' enters in the heart of the members of the Society. Lamenting about the lack of life in many members Piccolomini recalls the purpose of the Society and the very structures it has in order to achieve this goal.

All these elements of our spiritual structure are clearly set forth, as well in the first plan of the Society, which our illustrious architect, St. Ignatius, formed [...]. Our Institute, however, in spite of its admirable structure, would avail but little, if, as St. Paulinus says, instead of finding in our own hearts the living reality corresponding to those praises which we hear about ourselves, we find within us only a sterile soul and we hold before us only empty hands reproaching us for sloth.²⁴⁶

Talking of the need to renew oneself in the spirit of the Society of Jesus, Piccolomini underlines the use of such structures in the process of renewal when he says,

all ambition of ecclesiastical dignities is forbidden its members and they cannot accept them if offered. They have no fixed abode, but like the changing stars, are, at a moment's warning, ready to change their abode, not to gratify curiosity and to see the world, but that a limitless field may be open to their zeal. Finally, as to the light of our edifice, our meditations, studies, examinations of conscience, are so many windows opening out in all directions to receive at all hours of the day the inflowing rays of heavenly ideas.²⁴⁷

Piccolomini, when refers to the practice of the examen as one of the ways to receive rays of heavenly ideas, he talks of this practice as a means to find God. The only reference he makes to the examen does not in any way refer to spiritual discerning principles. Since we do not have anything to suggest that he talks of discernment and since the tone is one of renewal through corrections, we are inclined to call it as a moralistic examen.

7.5 Jan Philip Roothaan and the *Spiritual Exercises*

Jan Philip Roothaan was born in Amsterdam in 1785,²⁴⁸ and had studied classical and Semitic languages and Philosophy that gave him a solid intellectual background. He joined the Society in 1804 in White Russia – present Lithuania – and was ordained a priest in 1812. His initial pastoral involvement included popular mission preaching in Brig,

²⁴⁶ Francesco Piccolomini, "On the Utility and Necessity of Enforcing the Rules," in *Select Letters*, p. 121.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ Marcel Chappin, "Roothaan, Juan Felipe," in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1665-1671, here 1665.

southern Switzerland, between 1820-1823.²⁴⁹ While being the Rector at Turin he was made Vice-Provincial of Italy in 1829, and he took part in the 21st GC. The said GC lasted from 30 June to 17 August and the 25 representatives of the recently restored Society elected the youngest member Roothaan as the Superior General, on 9 July.²⁵⁰ The most significant contribution of Roothaan, of his twenty-four years of generalate, could be singled out that of the study of the *Spiritual Exercises*, rediscovering the value of the *Autograph* text. The efforts of this “General of the Spiritual Exercises”²⁵¹ has contributed to the rediscovery of the transforming value of the *Exercises* – the one that is closer to the original Spanish version – as well as to make it the centre of Jesuit life.²⁵²

7.5.1 The Role of the Examen

Roothaan argued that the best way to reenergize, conserve and propel the growth of the restored Society was to study the *Spiritual Exercises* diligently and put into practice faithfully just as Ignatius taught. He also believed that the charism and spirit of the First Fathers undoubtedly originated from the *Spiritual Exercises* and he writes,

el mejor medio de reanimar donde fuere necesario, o de conservar, fomentar y acrecentar en la Compañía pocos años ha renacido, [...] más apto y eficaz para transfundir el espíritu de los Padres en sus hijos, quiero decir, para hacer a estos lo más semejantes que fuere posible a sus Padres, como el diligente estudio y buen uso de los Ejercicios espirituales

²⁴⁹ He lived in White Russia till the Society was expelled from there in 1820, and later on due to the war moved from place to place. “Antes y después de ser sacerdote, ejerció la enseñanza y el trabajo pastoral. Tuvo los mismos trabajos (1820-1823) en Brig (Suiza), con notable aceptación como predicador de misiones populares.” Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 1666.

²⁵¹ Pascual Cebollada discusses the specific contribution of Roothaan – who is known as the “General of the Exercises” – in his recent study. See Pascual Cebollada Silvestre, “La significación de Jan Philip Roothaan, SJ en la historia de los ejercicios espirituales ignacianos,” in *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 91/357 (2016) pp. 391-410.

²⁵² Thanks to the efforts of Roothaan, the month-long Spiritual Exercise became, once again, an integral part of novitiate as well as tertianship. “R logró que los Ejercicios Espirituales ocupasen un lugar más central en la formación y vida de los jesuitas. Desde siempre interesado en el texto de san Ignacio, como general pudo consultar el más auténtico texto español, que usó para sus propios Ejercicios. Mientras consideraba la preparación de una nueva edición vulgata de los Ejercicios, con notas que indicasen las diferencias con el original, se le aconsejó hacer una traducción nueva, que, como versio litteralis, se publicase al lado de la vulgata. Tras la primera edición de 1835, R siguió trabajando y preparó nuevas ediciones, siempre revisadas, publicadas en 1838, 1847, 1852 y 1854. También hizo publicar el texto español, que regalaba a los que le visitaban. Insistió en que los jesuitas, sobre todo maestros de novicios e instructores de tercera probación, usasen en su modo auténtico los Ejercicios; pero constató que la mentalidad tardaba en cambiar. En todo caso, en los noviciados se volvió a practicar el mes entero de Ejercicios, y se prestó mayor atención al año de tercera probación. Asimismo, procuró que se dieran los Ejercicios auténticos en las casas que para ellos se iban abriendo.” Chappin, “Roothaan, Juan Felipe,” p. 1667.

de nuestro Santo Fundador. Porque si nuestros primeros Padres y los que después les siguieron, se transformaron en unos hombres enteramente nuevos sin echar mano de otros medios que de estos Ejercicios [...] al proponeros esta materia (como pensaba mucho tiempo hace), me parece os exhorto eficazísimamente en pocas palabras a la perfección propia de nuestra vocación, a la vitoria de todos los defectos e imperfecciones y a la práctica de todas las virtudes; y creo firmemente que si llego a persuadiros el estudio y diligente y perfecto uso del admirable libro de nuestro Santo Padre, se seguirá con abundantísimo provecho de todos nosotros, la renovación del espíritu en toda la Compañía.²⁵³

Roothaan was insistent on the necessity of giving instructions during the Exercises and it is interesting to note that such instructions served to meditate better.²⁵⁴

In his work *The Method of Meditation*²⁵⁵ Roothaan presents the particular and the daily examen to correct faults as well as to review the day. According to him, in the *Exercises* the examination has a role to find out the truth of what one meditates, and likewise the daily examen is also pointed towards finding the truth about one's conduct during the day. Emphasizing the need for such a diligent examen, both particular and daily, he says, "if we examine ourselves merely in general, as to these, and as it were speculatively, we easily appear to ourselves to have overcome vices or attained virtues: but when we indeed descend to particulars, we perceive ourselves far from both these goods."²⁵⁶ For him an examination is done in order to closely evaluate one's behaviour in order to have better knowledge of oneself and then to amend oneself, especially those faults which present greater difficulty.²⁵⁷

While talking about the goal of meditation, Roothaan talks of having very focused and practical objective which in turn has to be evaluated in the examen. For he says, "for its end, especially in the Society, is not only to devote an hour to God in prayer, but by meditating to cleanse the mind from vices, to adorn it with virtues, to amend and perfect

²⁵³ Juan Roothaan, "Sobre el estudio y uso de los Ejercicios espirituales de nuestro Santo Padre," in *Cartas selectas*, p. 194.

²⁵⁴ "El P. Roothaan enseñaba la necesidad de dar durante los ejercicios instrucciones particulares sacadas de la materia del libro de los Ejercicios, no solo para los demás, sino también para los ejercicios de los suyos. En la primera semana es necesaria la instrucción sobre el examen de conciencia, sobre confesión, etc." Pedro Pirri, *El P. Juan Roothaan, XXI General de la Compañía de Jesús*, Bilbao: El Mensajero de Corazón de Jesús, 1934, pp. 178-179.

²⁵⁵ John Roothaan, *The Method of Meditation*, New York: John Gilmary Shea, 1858.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²⁵⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 52.

the whole life, to confirm one's-self in the divine service, to strengthen one's-self against difficulties and temptations, to dispose one's actions in due order so as to discharge them perfectly"²⁵⁸ and for him the purposes for amendment of life and for perfection must be practical and really efficacious. According to him, the particularity of such purposes and suitability to one's state make it easy to evaluate:

something must be resolved on to be done this very day as to amendment of life or greater perfection. This can be easily done by those who scrutinize their conscience well in their exams, and who seriously desire to correct the defects which they themselves observe, or of which the Superior has admonished them. What anyone who has truly at heart, of itself occurs to him, and every meditation, whatever be the subject, serves him to amend it. For whether he meditates on the love of God or his threats against sinners; whether on the passion of Christ or his glorious mysteries, the practical conclusion will always lead him to make war on his own vice.²⁵⁹

By insisting that the meditations and the amendments should go hand in hand, Roothaan underlines the great utility of this spiritual practice. The intimate connection between what one meditates and the subject matter of particular examen can be explained in the very words of Roothaan as “the meditation ought frequently to coincide with the matter of the particular examen; and that the particular examen ought to be greatly aided by meditation.”²⁶⁰

In his commentary of the *Exercises*, Roothaan talks about the choice of subject matter: “la materia del examen particular son los pecados y defectos todos o las imperfecciones, [...] toda la materia del examen particular se puede reducir cómodamente a las tres cosas que el sacerdote recuerda cuando ofrece la Hostia, diciendo: *pro innumerabilibus PECCATIS et OFFENSIONIBUS et NEGLIGENTIS meis.*”²⁶¹ In the *Spiritual Exercises* Ignatius talks of particular sin or defect but Roothaan extends this to a much broader way; he includes sins, negligence or any stumbling blocks that may exist in the ambit of the subject matter. He defines the subject as “todos los *pecados*, graves o leves,

²⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 64.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 69.

²⁶¹ Juan Roothaan, *Los ejercicios espirituales de san Ignacio de Loyola* (anotado por el P. Juan Roothaan; introducción y traducción de las notas por el P. Teodoro Toni), Bilbao: El Mensajero de Corazón de Jesús, p. 124.

en que el hombre suele caer con más frecuencia, ya sean de pensamiento, ya de palabra, ya de obra ya incluso de omisión. Por pecados entiendo las *culpas* propiamente dichas.”²⁶²

Roothaan exhorts to make the examen on blocks that would hinder the path to holiness: “los tropiezos, culpas menos propiamente dichas, o involuntarias, en la que es fácil tropiece nuestra fragilidad en tantos y en variados azares de esta vida, casi como tropieza o choca, aunque no quiera, el que va por un camino pedregoso.”²⁶³ And this way he assures when one walks carefully one can serve God better because “caminando con más cautela, con el auxilio del examen particular, el siervo de Dios puede y debe disminuir estos tropiezos.” And negligence, though are not sins, could be the subject matter of the examen:

las negligencias, que, sin llegar a ser pecados de omisión, se nos cuelan en nuestras acciones, y aun cuando no pueden viciarlas completamente, sin embargo, suelen volverlas imperfectas y menos gratas a Dios. Son muchísimas, ya se mire la pureza de la intención, ya las maneras todas con que conviene se dispongan y lleven a cabo a los ojos de Dios nuestras acciones, conforme a la luz y gracia que el Señor nos comunica.²⁶⁴

Thus, Roothaan extends the scope of the examen beyond the usual sins and covers a much larger area of life. He proposes the way in which the particular examen is to be done: “ha de aplicarse, pues, el examen particular: 1) para quitar los pecados, 2) para quitar o por lo menos disminuir, los tropiezos, 3) para quitar, o por lo menos disminuir, las negligencias mediante el ejercicio de aquellas virtudes que deben adornar nuestras acciones todas y toda nuestra vida.”²⁶⁵

It is worth noting what Roothaan talks about the review of meditation – as a type of examen – as it coincides with the concept of the daily examen that he proposes.²⁶⁶ For him the examination of the meditation cannot be just made but with some repetition. In such examination, an evaluation is done about the way meditation was prepared and done, and then a recapitulation is done. In this recapitulation the resolutions or the practical

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 125.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 79ff.

conclusions, are made which later become subject matter of the particular examen.²⁶⁷ Along with such a review, Roothaan proposes some ejaculatory prayers adapted according to the subject matter to help the person to remember the resolution. Through this he hopes that “the fruit of meditation is brought to the subject of the particular examen, it is clear what a spiritual gain will result from this. We often break our resolutions, because the truths by the light of which we had conceived them, are obscured or vanish from our mind. This then will be a means of preserving this light in the soul.”²⁶⁸

Talking about the importance of asking grace in the daily examen, Roothaan makes the following observation: “pero la gracia especial, que se nos enseña a pedir aquí como en otras partes, es siempre doble, a saber: no sólo gracia de luz para conocer nuestras ciadas y recordarlas, sino también gracia de ayuda para enmendarnos en adelante. Don es en efecto, de Dios omnipotente y misericordioso, el que sus fieles le sirvan digna y laudablemente. Por eso hay que implorar su gracia con que corramos sin tropezar al logro de sus promesas.”²⁶⁹ This is particularly important as Ignatius would want everyone to ask for what he wants in the prayer right at the beginning of each period, indicating the diligence and the desire one has for reaching God. In Roothaan’s opinión, asking grace is of great importance in order to have a check against human tendency to confide in one’s own capacity: “porque quizá con ninguna otra cosa suele estorbarse tanto fruto sólido del examen particular, como con cierta oculta o no bastante advertida presunción que nos hace confiar en nuestros propósitos e industrias siendo así que nuestra suficiencia toda estriba en Dios.”²⁷⁰

²⁶⁷ “This recapitulation is the second thing to be done in the review, after the examen of the meditation, or rather with and in the examen. That is to say, the whole series of the late meditation is repassed in the mind, what was proposed in the 1st, what in the 2nd, what in the 3rd point. And while the defects committed are sought in this order, may come to mind of themselves, at the same time are recalled what practical conclusions were drawn from each point: by what motives they were supported; with what sentiments received into the mind, what resolutions were conceived. [...] let him recal, retaste, and ruminate these things, and set them before him to be often again recalled, retasted, and ruminated; let him confirm the purposes made in the course of the meditation, and resolve on their execution in due time, again foreseeing, if possible, the occasions. Finally, let him briefly implore the aid of God, to execute faithfully his resolutions.” Roothaan, *Method of Meditation*, pp. 83-84.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

²⁶⁹ Roothaan, *Los ejercicios espirituales*, p. 126.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

7.5.2 Observations

Commenting about the *Spiritual Exercises*, Roothaan points out that the particular examen has a much broader scope – what is to be examined are not just some particular faults, but even negligence and minor mistakes. He also wants that the examen should be made to control any behaviour which would hinder perfection in spiritual life. Roothaan understood the examen as a way to evaluate one's conduct during the day and this undoubtedly involved observing one's sins, understanding the roots of it, asking pardon and amending it and so on and so forth. From such a manner of saying we can conclude that what Roothaan has in mind is a moralistic examen.

7.6 Włodimir Ledóchowski

Włodimir Ledóchowski²⁷¹ in his exhortations recommends two examens, just like Ignatius visualized, and he approaches this with an understanding that this practice helps one to recollect oneself better during the day.

Exámenes de conciencia, que nuestro Santo Padre Ignacio nos manda hagamos dos veces al día, y que por su importancia no pueden ser pasados por alto en esta carta; tanto más cuanto que con ello me parece se dice lo suficiente sobre la confesión sacramental, que por regla han de hacer todos los Nuestros al menos cada ocho días [...]. Estos dos exámenes son un recogerse el espíritu por breve tiempo dos veces al día ante nuestro Dios y Señor, para ver con sinceridad cómo hemos servido, y para obrar en el reposo de la oración nuevos bríos con que servirle mejor adelante. Cuánto se estime en la Compañía este doble examen diario, se echa bien de ver por el hecho de que en los pasajes del Instituto en que se trata de los ejercicios de piedad, no solo se cita siempre el examen, sino que casi siempre se le pone en primer término, y para él se señala un visitador lo mismo que para la oración.²⁷²

²⁷¹ Włodimir Ledóchowski was born in 1866 in Austria and entered the Society in 1889 in Poland. After his ordination in 1894, he served as superior of theologate, vice-provincial, etc., and eventually as the provincial of Galitzia. Ledóchowski attended the 25th GC which elected him as Assistant of Germany. The 26th GC, held in 1915, elected him the General. Cf. Wiktor Gramatowski, "Ledóchowski, Włodimiro," in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1687-1688.

²⁷² Włodimir Ledóchowski, *La voz de N.P. Ledóchowski, colección sistematizada de las principales cartas y documentos del M.R.P. Włodimiro Ledóchowski, XXVI General de la Compañía de Jesús*, (edición arreglada por Arturo M. Cayuela), Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1945, p. 82.

According to Ledóchowski the central concern of the examen must be the rejection of sins and not merely “understanding” it; the purpose of the examen is to feel the pain of the fault so as to correct them later:

quizá haya que decir de los exámenes lo mismo que antes indiqué acerca de la meditación: que algunos se ocupan demasiado en los actos del entendimiento y menos en los de la voluntad; y, si bien es cierto que es de todo punto necesario el conocimiento propio y el caer bien en la cuenta de las faltas cometidas (lo cual es ya un gran don de Dios que, según nos enseña el Santo Padre, hemos de pedir con humildad cada día en el mismo examen); con todo, lo principal es concebir un aborrecimiento y dolor muy vivo de cualquier falta por pequeño que sea y asegurar la eficacia del propósito. Hay también que indagar las principales raíces de nuestros defectos, para robustecer más aquellos puntos en que se encuentra el alma más débil. Y para esto hay que insistir en la oración, a fin de excitar en nosotros esos sentimientos de dolor, formar resoluciones inquebrantables, e implorar el auxilio divino.²⁷³

By saying that the focus of the examen should be on the abhorrence of sins, Ledóchowski gives importance to removal of sins, with the help of prayer.

With regard to the frequency of the examen, Ledóchowski thinks that it must be made in special moments in order to get more fruit out of it. He recommends,

este recogerse el espíritu para examinar la conciencia hay que hacerlo a temporadas con especial intensidad: así, por ejemplo, en los ejercicios anuales, al tiempo que se prepara la confesión general, conviene hacer un examen a fondo de todo el año; lo mismo han de hacer los escolares y los demás que aún no han hecho los últimos votos, con ocasión de la renovación dos veces al año. Se dice así mismo a todos en el *Epitome* que “tengan por recomendada la práctica del retiro mensual”, práctica, que aparte de otros ejercicios para avivar el fervor, debe siempre incluir un detenido examen del mes pasado y del estado actual del alma.²⁷⁴

For him then, this is a repetition of the spiritual exercises,²⁷⁵ which in turn help conserve well the fruits of the annual retreat.

²⁷³ Ibid., pp. 83-84.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 84.

²⁷⁵ “A la práctica de este retiro mensual exhorté en otra ocasión encarecidamente a toda la Compañía [...] donde llama el retiro mensual “una como breve repetición de los Ejercicios” y dice ser medio aptísimo “para asegurar y conservar el fruto de los Ejercicios espirituales.” Cf. Ibid.

Further, in a letter addressed to the whole Society on fidelity in the practice of daily exercises of piety,²⁷⁶ General Ledóchowski talks of the importance of maintaining the fervour and spiritual depth, where he underlines the importance of the practice of the examen:

así como toda la actividad y extraordinarios frutos de la Compañía tuvieron origen en el primer fervor con que aquel puñado de hombres se consagró a Dios sin reserva, así también la verdadera prosperidad de la Compañía depende de la afición a las cosas espirituales y por esta se ha de medir: porque aquellas interiores son las que han de dar eficacia a estos exteriores para el fin que se pretende.²⁷⁷

While maintaining that the daily practices of piety help strengthen the spiritual life, Ledóchowski also spells out some spiritual practices that are applicable to the specific life style of the Society of Jesus. And they are the Eucharist, praying the Divine Office, morning mental prayer, spiritual reading, community prayer, monthly retreat and examination of conscience.²⁷⁸ According to him “estos ejercicios diarios de piedad, que son la base de toda nuestra vida interior; pesemos en el divino acatamiento su importancia veamos con qué diligencia los hemos cumplido, con cuánta los hemos de cumplir en adelante, en qué cosa debemos reafirmarnos y en cuales enmendarnos [...]”²⁷⁹

The General points out that there is always a tendency to look for comfort in worldly things, and he asserts: “sucede también que estos mismos religiosos, cansados en demasía con esos trabajos tomados sin el debido orden y desempeñados con actividad puramente humana, en lugar de dedicar algún tiempo a recogerse interiormente, de los que andan tan necesitados, buscan su descanso y solaz en pasatiempos mundanos;”²⁸⁰ therefore, “[...] si no aspiran con todas sus fuerzas a la santidad propia de la Compañía, y que esta santidad no la conseguirán sino por el camino de la perfecta observancia de todas nuestras reglas.

²⁷⁶ Here we refer to the letter “Carta a toda la Compañía sobre la fidelidad en hacer bien los ejercicios diarios de piedad” in the same collection.

²⁷⁷ Ledochowski, *La voz de*, p. 55.

²⁷⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 56, 68, 76, 79 & 81.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

Sólo así se dispondrán a ser dóciles instrumentos de que Dios se valga complacido para realizar maravillas [...].”²⁸¹

The primary purpose of the practice of such exercise, as Ledóchowski points out, is the perfection of all in the chosen life, and this is even more necessary because many leave the spiritual practices with the excuse that perfection is for chosen few. He links the practice of the examen with the subtle deception that religious faces with regard to spiritual life and offers the following two deceptions as examples:

cierta flojedad y pereza de espíritu, con la que algunos se dejan engañar persuadiéndose que la santidad y la perfección subida es cosa de unos pocos, llamados por Dios con vocación extraordinaria, y que por consiguiente no es cosa nuestra el aspirar ella, sino el contentarnos con una honesta medianía.²⁸²

[...] segundo: el de aquellos que admiten desde luego que se debe tender a la perfección y aun a la más alta perfección; pero, engañados por los falsos principios de cierta ascética moderna, creen que para alcanzar ese alto grado de santidad no son necesario tantos ejercicios espirituales; más aún, llegan a decir que tanto ejercicio espiritual sirve más bien de estorbo, y que hay que tender sin tales trabas a la íntima unión con Dios de modo suave.²⁸³

Thus, Ledóchowski argues that the practice of the examen makes people docile to the Spirit and helps them reach perfection through the daily faithful practice of the examen. He adds that a continual mortification coupled with acts of humility would also lead people in this line.²⁸⁴

Again, talking about poverty in the Society of Jesus, the General calls for a better examen to recognize the abuse of money and other resources: “ni nos hemos de olvidar nunca de la religiosa pobreza en el mismo modo de viajar [...] los reglas de los que van de camino [...] desearía, pues, que las tales reglas las leyesen alguna vez los Nuestros, verbigracia, en el rato de lectura espiritual prescrito para antes del examen de la noche; [...] para sujetar entonces el caso a un más detenido examen, para remirarlo más y para apretar

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 89.

²⁸² Ibid., p. 87.

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 89.

²⁸⁴ Ledochowski takes the example of Br. Alonso Rodríguez as a man of interiority who practiced mortification and extraordinary humility. See *ibid.*, p. 166. He also refers to the correction that Ignatius gave to Oliverio Manareo – asking him to do the particular examen – in order to practice modesty. See *ibid.*, p. 145.

la mano en las concesiones, en igualdad de circunstancias.”²⁸⁵ This again points to the type of examen that Ledóchowski in mind – that the practice of the examen is clearly to remove attachments, faults or abuses.

7.6.1 Observations

Ledóchowski talked about the examen as a moment of recollecting the entire day, in order to see how one has served the Lord, where one has grown or otherwise in personal perfection; or to evaluate one’s attitude towards material comforts. The practice of personal piety, exercises of mortification and other exercises that he recommends along with the examen all point to the moralistic character of the examen. Though he talks of deepening the fervour in the Society through the examen and other activities, it is mainly through removing the faults and sins that he hopes all, not just a select few, would achieve it and hence we can conclude that Ledóchowski presents a moralistic examination of conscience. Yet, we also see that the call for perfection is not just in moral aspects, but more in the spiritual realm and we can see the examen is also proposed as an instrument in spiritual discernment.

7.7 Pedro Arrupe

Pedro Arrupe,²⁸⁶ in his address to Jesuits and collaborators talks of the importance of the daily examen in the context of listening to the Spirit in one’s life situations. Arrupe makes it very clear the way the examen is to be made when he says,

S. Ignacio lo hacía cada hora, viendo en él el ejercicio por excelencia del discernimiento de espíritus, el medio de poner el corazón en contacto con Dios. No se trata tanto de conocer nuestras faltas cuanto de ponernos es estado de discernir en todo momento la voluntad de Dios. El verdadero examen de conciencia debe ser la actitud constante de buscar la voluntad de Dios por un contacto ininterrumpido con él, el examen de conciencia nos hace contemplativos en la acción.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ Ledochowski, *La voz de*, p. 256.

²⁸⁶ Pedro Arrupe was born in 1907 in Bilbao, Spain. He entered the Society in 1927, was ordained in 1936 in Belgium and pronounced his final vows in Japan, in 1943. He served as the Master of Novices, vice-provincial and then the first provincial of Japan before he was elected General in 1965. Cf. Bartolomeo Sorge, “Arrupe, Pedro,” in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp.1697-1705, here 1697.

²⁸⁷ Arrupe, “Notas sobre el modo de dar los Ejercicios hoy,” in *La identidad*, p. 234.

While reminding that the process of discernment is not a ready-made answer to all the problems Arrupe talks of the examination of conscience that becomes a discernment process. Arrupe exhorts all to be transformed by the Spirit that renews everything in order to discern the will of God, just as Ignatius envisioned. He wished that we use all the resources of faith human experience, reflections be used precisely to find the will of God in present times. Because, “este es el sentido del ‘examen de conciencia’ que S. Ignacio repetía tantas veces durante el día. No se trata de una mera revisión escrupulosa y detallada de nuestras acciones, sino más bien de una constante verificación de nuestra vida en cuanto debe estar siempre en armonía con el Espíritu.”²⁸⁸

Therefore, the mind of Arrupe is clear that the examen is to be a moment of discernment where one is looking for a constant presence of God and he believes that this practice makes one a true contemplative in action. Moreover, this practice helps renew a spirit of constant prayer. Therefore, the examen becomes a moment to see the imprints of the Spirit on our hearts. Thus, we can conclude that Arrupe visualizes a spiritual discerning examen.

7.8 Peter-Hans Kolvenbach

Peter-Hans Kolvenbach²⁸⁹ in his addresses and exhortations often promoted the practice of examen and he proposed this to be learned and practiced well in the early stages of formation. He talks of the important role of the examen during the formative years as well as in the life of Jesuits active in apostolic works. Above all, he talks of the need for an attitude of the examen for all the Jesuits and this gives a clear background as to what he thinks on this practice in the Society.

Para “conocer internamente” [...] nos situemos en la actitud que fue el punto de partida de sus trabajos: la actitud del “examen” ignaciano. Se trata de situarnos ante Dios para acoger y agradecer los dones sorprendentes que hemos recibido en estos últimos años, y

²⁸⁸ Pedro Arrupe, “A la escucha del Espíritu,” in *La identidad*, p. 485.

²⁸⁹ Kolvenbach was elected by the 33rd GC in 1983. He was born in 1928 in Holland, entered the Society in 1948 and was ordained a priest in 1961, in Lebanon where he worked over twenty years. Before being elected general, he served as the vice-provincial of the Near-East Province and had taught linguistics at *Pontifical Oriental Institute* at Rome. Cf. Paul Begheyn, “Kolvenbach, Peter-Hans,” in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1705-1706.

para pedir la serena luz de Dios sobre el modo como hemos intentado cumplir nuestra misión. Ni autocomplacencia ni derrotismo. Mientras no nos situemos en esta actitud de fondo no entenderemos los documentos de esta Congregación, ni nos haremos disponibles para escuchar sus llamadas. Y lo primero a lo que os invita esta Congregación es a no comenzar ninguna reflexión o planificación sin ponerlos en esta actitud.²⁹⁰

Addressing the General Congregation Kolvenbach proposes this openness to the gift of God as the basic attitude, and here we can say that this attitude is not limited to the Congregation but to daily life of Jesuits. We take a look at what he says further on the practice of the examen.

In his vision of Jesuit formation of the novices, abnegation, self-awareness and inner freedom have important roles and they are to be cultivated as necessary qualities.²⁹¹ He talks about the important role of sacraments like Eucharist and reconciliation²⁹² in order to progress in the service of God. During the regency, where a Jesuit comes in touch with the apostolic reality, the practice of examen is presented as a typical Jesuit prayer; for he says “en el examen de conciencia debe también descubrir la oración apostólica típica de Ignacio; a ello le estimulará el progreso que alcance en un conocimiento propio más profundo.”²⁹³ He terms the practice of examen specially important during the time when one is involved in intellectual preparation: “el examen de conciencia, como es sabido, representa, ya desde el tiempo de San Ignacio, un momento de encuentro con Dios, especialmente decisivo durante la vida de estudio.”²⁹⁴

The examen is important not only in the life of those in formation but in the life of all Jesuits and what Kolvenbach proposes as a way towards God is the following:

Ignacio da numerosas indicaciones prácticas a quienes no han podido hacer los Ejercicios Espirituales completos [18], pero calla cuando se trata de quienes los han terminado. Esto no debe extrañarnos. Ignacio confía en el jesuita ya formado: él sabrá cuándo, cómo y

²⁹⁰ Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, “Por una cultura del diálogo y de la solidaridad, ¿Hacia dónde nos llama la Congregación General XXXIV a los Centros Fe-Cultura?” in *Selección de escritos del P. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach 1991-2007*, Madrid: editado por la Curia del Provincial de España, 2007, p. 400.

²⁹¹ Cf. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, “Formación en el noviciado,” p. 16ff.

²⁹² In his discourse on the formation of novices Kolvenbach does not talk about the examen but spells out abnegation and self-knowledge. Araujo Santos in his analysis of what Kolvenbach says, is of the opinion that abnegation, self-knowledge and examen are closely linked and therefore Kolvenbach implies it. Cf. Araujo Santos, *Mas él, examinándolo*, pp. 360-361.

²⁹³ Kolvenbach, “Formación en el,” p. 90.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

cuánto tiempo ha de rezar. Ya en 1599, los primeros compañeros, en un Directorio, enmarcaron el itinerario espiritual abierto en un entramado de prácticas concretas. ¿Cómo se puede hablar de espiritualidad ignaciana, de un camino hacia Dios, sin tener, al menos, media hora de meditación diaria, exámenes de conciencia cotidianos, los sacramentos de la reconciliación y la eucaristía, sin vivir día a día las opciones que el Señor ha tomado, sin su preferencia por los pobres, sin su amor por la Iglesia? Es cierto que Ignacio no se ocupa de lo que ocurra tras el retiro. No dice nada acerca del paso y la vuelta a la vida cotidiana después de este período agitado por los espíritus, pero sí confía en la experiencia fundante que cada uno ha podido vivir, siendo muy consciente de que nada será ya como antes, sino que continuará en un discernimiento orante, en una espiritualidad encarnada.²⁹⁵

For Kolvenbach, the time spent in prayer and other spiritual activities are means to find God and he cites the examen as one of such means. And, according to him, this is to be practiced in a discerning way, facilitating an incarnated spirituality.

While dealing with the examen, Kolvenbach presented the model of Ignatius, the way he made his examen saying,

durante largas horas de oración dialogaba con cada una de las personas de la Stma. Trinidad y practicaba fielmente el examen de conciencia, no como una técnica que ayudase a mejorar la calidad moral de su vida, sino únicamente para mantener la mirada sobre la presencia de Dios en todas las cosas. De este modo ninguna decisión era tomada sino delante de Dios o, mejor, en Dios: cada elección de su vida era precedida, envuelta y prolongada por la oración [...]. Todo sucede como si para Ignacio todos los modos de oración, sea una simple plegaria vocal, un examen de conciencia muy humilde, sea una profunda contemplación del misterio de Cristo o una lectura espiritual de los acontecimientos de su vida, pueden ser profundamente místicos, es decir, verdaderamente impregnados del Espíritu en el cual solamente podemos orar “abba Padre.” Ignacio ha aprendido que una vida de oración en seguimiento de Cristo no es una empresa humana, sino ante todo un don del Espíritu. Ignacio mismo confiesa que Dios se comportaba con él del mismo modo que un maestro se comporta con un niño: le enseñaba.²⁹⁶

Thus, we see that the type of examen that Kolvenbach visualizes is one that looks at the presence of God in all the things. In this way, the examen is a look at the action of the Spirit in the life of people. Kolvenbach linked the practice of the daily examen, as well as the particular examen, to the life and mission of people, asserting that it is a practice that is simple yet practical, adaptable to different life situations.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁵ Kolvenbach, “La práctica de la espiritualidad ignaciana,” in *Selección de escritos*, pp. 583-584.

²⁹⁶ Kolvenbach, “Ignacio, hombre de oración,” in *Selección de escritos*, p. 646.

²⁹⁷ “No sería errado proponer la espiritualidad ignaciana como una espiritualidad simple y práctica, conveniente para cualquier tipo de vida. Ignacio mismo decía que podía ser útil. Y en realidad, hay hombres de negocios que utilizan técnicas y métodos como el examen particular o la elección. Mucha gente debe a los Ejercicios Espirituales su manera personal de orar o su gusto por leer la Escritura. Es un

7.9 Other Documents

We have seen the Rules of the Society of Jesus, the *Ratio*, the GCs and such similar documents recommending the practice of the daily examen. We find many other documents that recommend the practice of the examen, not necessarily to the entire body of the Society of Jesus and we present here one recent such example. The document that calls our attention is the final agreement that was arrived at by the delegates of Jesuit educators. At the end of the International Congress they declare their commitment to act as a universal body and outlines their concern:

la experiencia espiritual de San Ignacio de Loyola, centrada en Cristo, es la piedra angular de la Educación Jesuita y nuestro desafío sigue siendo invitar a nuestros estudiantes y comunidades escolares a descubrir su riqueza inagotable en el encuentro personal y comunitario con el Evangelio. Reconocemos la diversidad de los contextos religiosos y seculares en los que operan nuestros colegios; sin embargo, la educación de los jesuitas no puede suceder a menos que se pueda ofrecer una sólida formación religiosa y espiritual en nuestros colegios. En nuestro contexto histórico, esta formación nos exige exponer a los alumnos a nuestra herencia espiritual, a la diversidad religiosa de nuestros contextos y del mundo, para promover el respeto y el aprecio por otras religiones y expresiones seculares.²⁹⁸

Terming the spiritual experience of Ignatius and the Spiritual Exercises as the foundation of the Jesuit education it proposes:

1. Los delegados se comprometen a promover el examen de conciencia en cada uno de los colegios para ayudar a los y las estudiantes a escuchar su voz interior y aprender el camino de la interioridad.
2. Los delegados se comprometen a trabajar con los colegios para asegurar que se implemente un módulo (o alguna unidad similar en el plan de estudios) de educación interreligiosa. Este módulo debe permitir a los y las estudiantes aprender acerca de y desde las religiones del mundo y respetar las diversas formas en que las religiones expresan y celebran lo divino.
3. Los delegados se comprometen a encontrar maneras en que la Espiritualidad Ignaciana (ref. *Ejercicios Espirituales*) pueda adaptarse activamente al entorno

hecho que también en el ámbito psicológico un gran número de hombres y mujeres han sacado de los Ejercicios equilibrio y esperanza, entusiasmo y paz en su vida.” Kolvenbach, “Discurso a la XIII Asamblea mundial de la Comunidad de Vida Cristiana en 1993,” in *Selección de escritos*, p. 444.

²⁹⁸ JESEDU, “Congreso internacional de los delegados de educación de la Compañía de Jesús – Acuerdos finales,” Río de Janeiro, 2017, p. 2.

escolar para que los estudiantes aprendan el hábito del silencio y la práctica del discernimiento.²⁹⁹

This document visualizes the examen as a tool that would permit the students to be in touch with their inner voice as well as to grow in the experience of God. By proposing to cultivate silence and discernment in the students, they propose the examen clearly as a tool of spiritual discernment and we do not notice any element of moralism here.

7.10 Observations

After studying these letters, we can say that over the centuries, the Generals addressed different concerns and the approach has been diverse. In the initial years the call for renewal and the means of the examen is clearly moralistic, whereas that of Aquaviva, more than being moralistic, it is more therapeutic. Over the centuries all the Generals who exhorted Jesuits to renewal of spirit proposed the examen as an exercise in moralistic way, until the twentieth century. We can clearly see a shift from Arrupe, that is coinciding with the Aggiornamento of the Vatican Council II the correspondence and documents present the examen in relation to spiritual discernment.

8 Conclusion

The examen has been a part of the educational tradition of Jesuits, starting with the first institution at Messina and this same practice is being given a new impetus through the commitment of Jesuit educators recently. The *Regulae* of the Society and other documents provided us with vital insights to understand the proliferation of the daily examen in the colleges early on. At the same time, they reveal the gradual development of this practice in different contexts be it colleges in Rome or in Hispanic provinces. The *Ratio*, as the official document regarding Jesuit education, gave a definite rhythm to the daily examen in educational institutions all over the world.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

The Society of Jesus as a religious institution has embraced the examen right from the beginning and we have seen the commitment in many of the GCs and in the repeated call for renewal of Fathers General. The concern of the Generals – from Laínez to the present one Arturo Sosa – is the renewal and perseverance of the spirit of the Society of Jesus and we have seen that over the centuries this same concern has been expressed in various letters. Laínez writing to those working remote missions asked them to be faithful to the practice of examen even when other spiritual nourishment was not feasible and Aquaviva strongly promoted the examen to correct the faults, to get back to the roots of the Institute as well as to cure the diseases of the soul. We have also seen that many subsequent generals – Vitelleschi, Tamburini, Ledóchowski – appealing to this ascetic practice to root out the evil that blocks people in their progress to perfection. Roothaan, through his great love for the *Exercises*, invited all to get to the original idea of Ignatius, and this was to be faithful to the practice of daily examen and applying the particular examen even small imperfections. In all of these the focus was on getting rid of the sin and growing in perfection.

On the other hand, we see Arrupe inviting all to find a discerning principle in the practice of the examen, in the context of an openness to the Spirit. He saw the examen not merely as a scrupulous revision of the day, but as a constant verification of the degree of harmony that exists between the Spirit. In the same line, Kolvenbach also visualizes the examen as a typical Ignatian prayer that centres on discerning principles. And a similar vision is seen in the subsequent Generals.

Having analysed these documents that provide greater clarity in the evolution of life in the Society of Jesus, we can indeed identify a clear pattern: by and large, until the Vatican Council II, the examen was seen as an exercise with moralistic tone and from the Thirtyfirst GC onwards, the examen is seen as a spiritual exercise, be it in the discourse of Generals or in the decrees of the Congregations. It would be interesting to see what developments occur in the twentieth century in relation to the Ignatian examen and that is what we hope to do in our next chapter.

Chapter 6

The Ignatian Examen in the Twentieth Century

1 Introduction

We have been tracing the story of the Ignatian examen and we have just studied the documents of the Society of Jesus ranging from the earliest documents like the *Regulae* up to the latest General Congregation. The present chapter intends to analyse the scenario of twentieth century and beyond, and this we hope to do by going through the contributions of some of the important spiritual writers. As such, there are many articles and books available on the examination of conscience from this period and we intend to capture the main line of thought and not look for an exhaustive list, lest be an unending task.

At first, we will have a glance at the beginnings of serious research with regard to the sources of the whole of Ignatian spirituality. It was around this period that the entire writings of Ignatius were made available, and some of them like the *Spiritual Diary*, for the first time. We suspect that the availability of all the sources would influence the

interpretation of Ignatius' mind and we need to verify this in the following pages. Hence, we will briefly look at the research of the *Monumenta* while also taking note of the number of journals is spirituality that began to serve the needs of people. Subsequently we will take up authors who dealt with the examen in order to capture their line of thought.

While discussing the developments in this century in spirituality and morality, we have indicated the confluence of moral and spiritual spheres and so it would be interesting to verify if and how this convergence would leave its impact on the interpretation of Ignatian examen. We have seen that the term spirituality itself came to be used around this period and there was greater interest in spirituality of finding God in the world. Within the Society of Jesus itself there was a sense of consolidation and an urge to deepen its own spirituality, especially after restoring the Order worldwide. Keeping this theological and spiritual background in mind as well as recalling the Aggiornamento of Vatican Council II that marked this century we embark on our central concern – to trace the course of the interpretation of the Ignatian Examen. Unlike the previous chapter, here we study documents, letters, authors together; that is to say in the 20th Century we have different types of resources for our analysis.

2 The *Monumenta* and Subsequent Research

The idea of a collection of documents regarding the Society of Jesus emerged as early as 1750 in the writings of Andrés Marcos Burriel, as a 'Project of Arts and Science in Spain.' This novel idea had initially included publication of documents on the life of Ignatius, his *Spiritual Exercises*, Letters and writings of Francisco Javier, the first ten companions of Ignatius as well as the figure of Francisco Borja. The later addition of various themes related to Jesuits in Americas and a history of different provinces in Spain itself, made this project an enormous task that would have run into many years. This ambitious project – presented to Francisco Ravago the confessor to the King Fernando VI – however was buried by the adverse wind of anti-Jesuit sentiments and the subsequent

exile of Jesuits from Spain in 1767 and the suppression of the Order worldwide in 1773.¹ The second attempt was by Miguel García who had begun to gather all the letters of Ignatius, but left the task incomplete in 1767 to Alejandro Battier, who also tried his best to complete it. The attempts of Andrés Galán also unfortunately did not see much result, and it was Roque Menchaca who managed to publish the letters of Ignatius, though incomplete, in one collection in Latin.² This work, realized in 1804, merits much appreciation when we consider the fact that the Society was suppressed in 1773. Scholars also indicate a third attempt during the period of 1874-1879 under the leadership of Miguel Mir, Antonio Cabre and Juan José de la Torre. A close collaborator in this work was also José María Vélez who would later play an important role in the whole project of the *Monumenta*.

The defining moments of the *Monumenta* had the inspiration in Iohannes Janssen in proposing a complete documentation on Ignatius to Bernardo Duhr. The subsequent encouragement by Antonio María Anderledy, the then Vicar general and later the General, gave a great boost to Duhr, who also was encouraged by the favourable papal disposition in Leo XIII. Vélez was roped in to head the group which would draw up and write this *historiae*,³ from their base in Madrid. In 1892 the General Congregation of Loyola that elected Luis Martín as the General, not only supported Vélez in this project but also extended the project to the whole Society. With the support of the provincials and the approval of the General, in spite of the initial difficulties, Vélez published 10 volumes in the first four years, starting from 1894.⁴ Gaining from the first five years of experience, Cecilio Gómez Rodeles as the director – along with Mariano Lecina, Federico Cervós and Vicente Agustí – published 35 volumes in fifteen years.⁵ Thus, the *Monumenta*, with the

¹ Cf. Zubillaga, Félix - Hanisch, Walter (eds.), *Guía manual de los documentos históricos de la Compañía de Jesús de los cien primeros volúmenes, que tratan de los orígenes de la Compañía de San Ignacio, sus compañeros y colaboradores, legislación, pedagogía y misiones de Asia y América*, Roma: Institutum Historicum, 1971, p. 9.

² Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

³ Cecilio Gómez Rodeles had proposed to call the whole project as *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*, whereas Vélez wanted it as *Monumenta Historiae Societatis Iesu*.

⁴ Four volumes in 1894, two in 1895, two in 1896 and two more in 1897. Cf. Zubillaga – Hanisch, *Guía manual*, p. 11.

⁵ Rodeles continued where his predecessor had left. During his fifteen years as the director he kept up continuity as he was the close collaborator with Vélez.

encouragement from the General Luis Martín and Cardinal Francisco Ehrle an enthusiastic supporter of the whole project, moved ahead publishing pages regularly. The vacuum of leadership left by the death of General Martín, the complexity works and other difficulties slowed down the whole project around the years 1911-1912. And the new General Francisco Javier Wernz, after consulting expert historians like Francisco Ehrle, Antonio Astráin, Bernardo Duhr and Pietro Tacchi-Venturi, decided to give a new direction to the whole *Monumenta*, which paved way for the entire project to be shifted to Rome.⁶

However, shifting the base had to wait due to various political reasons, and meanwhile the work progressed under the leadership of Cervós, from 1912-1919. With Arturo Codina at the helm of things (1919-1921) saw the return of the 160-page booklets and monthly books. Though the war of 1914-1918 had slowed down the entire project, there were fourteen volumes published between 1913 and 1921. The new General Wlodimir Ledóchowski, elected in 1915, could look into the matters of the *Monumenta* only from 1921, and he wished to give a new orientation to the whole project by opening a scope like the *Monumenta* from Madrid would publish documents of general interest, documents related to mission, etc. while the entire Society would collaborate in coming up with Assistancy-wise history. Subsequently, Antonio Astráin was named the director of *Monumenta*, especially with the view to prepare a series on missions. The less fruitful search for documents and manuscripts, difference of opinion on the language employed in writing, the ambiguity in shifting the base from Madrid to Rome, etc. contributed to the slow progress and thus there were only two volumes between 1922-1932.⁷ Dionisio Fernández Zapico headed the whole project between 1926-1929 and handled efficiently the transfer from Madrid to Rome.

The shifting of *Monumenta* to Rome brought about innovations and new approach that began with the letter of General Ledóchowski, creating a new College for the writers. This “Colegio de Escritores” had three-fold objective of continuing the *Monumenta*, publishing of a journal and collection of books. With the above objectives in mind this

⁶ Ibid., p. 13.

⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

colegio was renamed as *Instituto Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús* in 1935. In spite of all the hard work put in, the series on the writings of Ignatius as well as that of the initial years of the Society saw great delay. It was in 1932 that the journal named *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu (AHSI)* began to publish articles, unedited texts, bibliography on the Society, and so on. Other than this journal, the newly founded *Instituto Historico* took up also *Bibliotheca Instituti Historici Societatis Iesu* (1941) and *Subsidia ad Historiam Societatis Iesu* (1965).

As a fruit of such meticulous and technically correct research in the first quarter of the century, we have access to vast volumes on the mind of Ignatius. The availability of such a wide range of material has facilitated – so to say – a deeper research and access to the mind of Ignatius, first time in many centuries. Such resources include the first critical edition of the *Spiritual Exercises* published in 1919, the *Autobiography* published 1904 and later revised and corrected in 1943 and the *Spiritual Diary* published in 1934. These last two have been made available to the public for the first time after nearly three and half centuries of their existence. The pages of the *Autobiography* shed new insights into pilgrim's encounter with the Lord – how Inigo was led gradually by God, while the pages of the *Spiritual Diary* open a new window to the innermost chamber of his soul where he found God and discerned His will. The account of Ignatius' pilgrim years, especially that of Manresa-Montserrat, and his entries in the diary regarding the way he made choices contribute in a great way to understand Ignatius better, as against an earlier partial understanding largely based on the *Spiritual Exercises* and the *Constitutions*. Coinciding with these new studies, there were also similar research on the origins of the *Spiritual Exercises*, its historical context, the possible sources, the influence of Ignatius' own personal experience, and so on.⁸

⁸ Among other things, worth mentioning is the systematic scientific research on the origin of the Exercises especially by Codina: Arturo Codina, *Los orígenes de los ejercicios espirituales de S. Ignacio de Loyola: estudio histórico*, Barcelona: Biblioteca Balmes, 1926. See also Arzubialde, *Ejercicios espirituales*, pp. 31-62.

The subsequent research and analysis sprung forth many new aspects and the mystical element of Ignatian spirituality is only one among them.⁹ The availability of the original sources coupled with greater desire to reiterate the uniqueness of Ignatian spirituality triggered serious research, and the result is seen in the abundant studies that started around this period. Though the *Autobiography* and the *Spiritual Diary* were published in the early part of the century, their significance in understanding Ignatian spirituality had to wait a while. The unprecedented work of Joseph de Guibert on the spirituality of Jesuits laid emphasis on bringing together the various aspects of a corpus termed as Ignatian spirituality whose beginning was in the profound personal experience of Ignatius. Such a personal experience of God that Ignatius had at a specific moment in history was methodically offered to his followers in the form of the *Spiritual Exercises* and generations of Jesuits over centuries transmitted in turn this fundamental way of experiencing God to the rest of the world. A serious research sprung forth in the first quarter of the 20th century initiated by the *Monumenta* and the later years grew on such solid groundwork.

Similarly, in the early part of the same century there arose a keener interest in studying the original sources of such a spirituality and this desire was being fulfilled through journals and books that brought out richer aspects of Ignatian Spirituality. We have seen that the term spirituality itself had established itself by this period and Jesuits begin to employ such a word to express what was considered the ascetical and mystical aspects of their founder's charism. The journal *Manresa* was born in such a context (1925) with the view to make available the rich heritage of the *Exercises* to all Christians. The change of the title from "Journal of the Exercises" to "Journal of Asceticism and Mysticism in relation to the Exercises" clearly indicates the shift in the approach.¹⁰ A similar periodical that was already serving the same purpose of making available the sources of the Society was the

⁹ Till the turn of 20th century, the usage of mysticism was not associated with Ignatius. Starting from 1930s we find profound study on the *Exercises* like Louis Peeters, *Vers l'union divine par les exercices de S. Ignace*, Louven: Museum Lessianum, 1931; (Spanish edition: *Hacia la unión con Dios por medio de los ejercicios de S. Ignacio*, Bilbao: Mensajero del Corazón, 1944). In this scholarly works Peeters puts forth the *Exercises* as a school of mysticism. Peeters was the flagbearer and later years many were to follow him in this line of research.

¹⁰ Initially the journal was titled *Manresa: Revista trimestral de Ejercicios*, and in 1940 we find the change *Manresa: Estudios de ascética y mística en relación con los Ejercicios*.

Woodstock Letters (1872).¹¹ Another effort, but offered to a larger audience, was the *Review for Religious* (1942) that published articles and reflections on religious life with Ignatian Spirituality as the foundation. Yet another venture that contributed much to the dissemination of Ignatian heritage was the journal *Christus* (1954) that addressed the French-speaking world. The availability of a wide range of resources along with serious research in various parts of the world concerning the spiritual ingenuity of Ignatius brought forth a greater clarity in identifying the specific contributions of Ignatius.

Among these journals, the *Review for Religious* published the highest number of articles, i.e. 19 out of the total of 36 articles dealing directly with the examen, while Manresa had 14 articles. The most striking fact, however, is the period when the articles were published: between 1950 to 1979 there were 15 articles, and this was around the period of the Vatican Council which called for renewal in life. The *Woodstock Letters* came out with an article on the examen and discernment in 1953 and the other noteworthy contribution was by *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* which dedicated a lengthy entry on examination of conscience in 1960. The next page gives a list of publications before we turn our attention to individual authors who deal with the examen.

¹¹ *Woodstock Letters* focused on events and historical notes connected with missions and life in the Americas. It had begun initially as an ‘in-house’ record of activity of the American Jesuits, undertaken by the scholastics at Woodstock College, who also published the *Messenger of Sacred Heart*. It was conceived as letters that edify Jesuits as well as their family and collaborators, and with the success it covered history and activities of the Society in America. Later on, there were also articles related to historical research with regard to common heritage of Jesuits, which serves in our research. See Robert C. Carriker (ed.), *Woodstock Letters: A Historical Journal of Jesuit Education and Missionary Activities. Guide to the Microfiche Collection*, Maryland: CIS, 1987, pp. 3ff.

Important Publications Related to Ignatian Spirituality

Year	Publicaion	Place
1894	<i>MHSI</i>	Madrid/Rome
1920	Revue d'Ascetique et Mystique	Toulouse, France
1925	Manresa	Madrid, Spain
1925	Geist und Leben (Zeitschrift für Aszese und Mystik)	Würzburg, Germany
1932	AHSI	Rome, Italy
1942	Review for Religious	St. Louis, USA
1951	Korrespondenz zur Spiritualität der Exerzitien.	Augsburg, Germany
1954	Christus	Paris, France
1961	The Way	London, England
1962	Dictionnaire de Spiritualité	France
1965	The Way Supplement	London, England
1968	Progressio	Rome, Italy
1968	Boletín de Espiritualidad	Buenos Aires, Argentina
1969	Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits	St. Louis, USA
1970	CIS	Rome, Italy
1972	Ignis	Mumbai, India
1972	Appunti di Spiritualità	Napoli, Italy
1976	Cahiers de Spiritualite Ignatienne	Quebec, Canada
1977	Cuadernos de Espiritualidad	Lima, Peru
1977	Diakonia	Panama, Panama
1980	Cuadernos de Espiritualidad	Santiago, Chile
1981	Cardoner	Brussels, Belgium
1986	Boletín de Espiritualidad	Mexico, Mexico
1989	Itaici	Itiaki, Brazil
1989	Boletín de Espiritualidad	Asunción, Paraguay
1990	EIDES	Barcelona, Spain
1991	Apuntes Ignacianos (Reflexiones CIRE)	Bogotá, Colombia
2006	Ignaziana (online)	Napoli, Italy

3 José Calveras Santacana

José Calveras Santacana was born in Vilafranca del Penedés, near Barcelona, Spain on 15 April 1890 and entered the Jesuit novitiate in Gandía in 1905.¹² A great interest in the *Exercises* and a profound knowledge in Classical and Romanic philology helped Calveras to interpret Ignatius, and he published series of exegetical studies on the *Exercises*.¹³ The innumerable retreats preached all over Spain – especially the ‘intensive exercises’ for priests and religious – the works in interpreting the Ignatian texts, the Lexicon on the *Exercises*, and similar efforts¹⁴ make Calveras an important figure of early 20th century - a man with outstanding competence¹⁵ - in relation to our research. He died in 1964, in Barcelona.

3.1 Calveras and the Role of the Examen in the *Exercises*

Calveras talks about the importance of the examen in relation to Three Ways of Praying [238-260], Fifth Addition [77], and in the section on the Examination of Conscience [24-43], where he clearly argues for a greater role of the examen. He considers the examen useful not only in the First Week, but also in the whole of the Exercises where the key is to use this exercise to grow in greater knowledge.

Analysing the Fifth Addition, Calveras points out that the importance of the examen lies in the fact that it could be an exercise to come to know the action of God. Pointing out

¹² See Cándido de Dalmases, “Calveras Santacana, José,” in *DHCJ* vol. I, p. 606.

¹³ He studied humanities at Zaragoza and later taught classics to the Jesuit juniors. His sickness on the way to Rome and the subsequent long recuperation in Valencia did not deter him from undertaking serious research on the *Exercises*. The graveness of the situation is seen from the fact that he was administered the sacrament of the sick on the day he was to begin his classes in Rome and on his return in Valencia it took nine months to recover from his ailment. Once he regained he was sent to Manresa and it was here that he contributed in the Congress on the *Spiritual Exercises* (1923) which later became inspiration for his further research. See *ibid*; Alfredo Muntané, “In memoriam,” *Manresa* 37 (1965) 99-112. See also Josep M. Rambla, “José Calveras, S.J., hombre de los Ejercicios espirituales,” in *Manresa* 85 (2013) pp. 291-310.

¹⁴ Calveras is known for his direction of retreats especially of 30 days; between 1945 and 1964 he preached retreats to more than 4000 people, practically in all the dioceses of Spain. Calveras also played an important role in preparing the critical edition of the *Sp. Ex.* for *MHSI*. See Muntané, “In memoriam,” pp. 99ff.

¹⁵ Calveras is termed as an authority on the *Exercises* owing to his “singular competencia en dar e interpretar los ejercicios, junto con su ciencia filológica.” Cf. Rambla, “José Calveras,” p. 291.

that the text talks of a passivity – ‘how things have gone for me’ – Calveras insists that the review of meditation (examen de oración) is not an evaluation of what one has done, but what fruits were drawn from them. The concern in such a review of meditations and contemplations would be to see what graces one has received – general or particular as one had desired and asked for at the beginning of prayer [45, 55, 65]. For Calveras, the examen of prayer then is

alcanzar con plenitud el fruto de los Ejercicios, así el general como el particular, no es obra sólo de la actuación diligente de nuestras potencias naturales, según la forma y modo que propone San Ignacio para cada ejercicio, aunque obren ellas libera y tranquilamente, por efecto de la soledad [20] y de la guarda diligente de las adiciones. Es menester además, que la divina y suma bondad comunique al alma sus dones y gracias espirituales [20]. A obtener abundantemente este auxilio sobrenatural se dirige la petición de gracia para lo que quiero y deseo, que constituye siempre el último preámbulo; y lógico es que, terminado el ejercicio, vea el alma si ha sido escuchada su súplica, examinando la acción que haya tenido Dios en el ejercicio pasado. Por otra parte nuestro enemigo procurará ingerirse, o descubierta o solapadamente, para estorbar el fruto, y esta acción del mal espíritu habrá de tocarla con frecuencia el examen de la oración.¹⁶

Here it becomes clear that the review of prayer is a moment to accurately assess ‘how it has gone for me’ in the meditation; and this is achieved by observing clearly the action of God as well as the tricks of the enemy of human nature.

Calveras reminds that the effectiveness of the review of prayer depends on how faithful and consistent one is to practice it. It is not enough to see if it has gone well or bad, rather, it is necessary to get to the cause:

no basta llegar a concretar si me ha ido bien o mal en el ejercicio pasado; es menester además investigar la causa del mal o del buen suceso hasta dar con ella, y una vez conocida, o arrepentirme del motivo próximo o remoto puesto por mí para el mal resultado y proponer la enmienda, o dar gracias a Dios de que haya habido fidelidad de mi parte, atribuyéndolo todo a gracia especial suya, y proponer de proceder en delante de la misma manera. Bien puede afirmarse, que la eficacia del examen de la meditación depende de la práctica fiel y constante de estos puntos de la forma ignaciana, buscar la causa hasta hallarla y arrepentirse o dar gracias.¹⁷

¹⁶ José Calveras, *Examen de la oración: declaración y práctica de la quinta adición de los ejercicios de san Ignacio*, Barcelona: Editorial Balmes, 1940, pp. 7-8.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Pointing out that nothing is more harmful than tepidness or spiritual apathy, Calveras insists on the importance of this examen in detecting the movements of different spirits to ensure spiritual progress.

Further, Calveras points out that fidelity to such an examination of movements in meditation and contemplation helps one to notice consolations or desolations. He interprets the diligent examination in the discernment process as finding the cause of desolation and subsequently removing them. He reiterates that the experience of desolation should not be alarming as it is only an indication of much internal activity when there is struggle and testing and therefore time to work against such desolation with much fervour.

El tiempo de desolación es poco favorable para adelantar aprisa, y si se prolonga, puede llevar también a la paralización del espíritu, que se cansa al fin de resistir. [...] y para ello aconseja reaccionar fervorosamente contra la desolación [319], y entre otros medios propone el “mucho examinar,” que equivale a examinar hasta dar con la causa de la desolación, para quitarla. Y así propone luego [332] tres causas principales, porque nos hallamos desolados, a saber, nuestras faltas y negligencias en los ejercicios espirituales, la prueba de nuestra fidelidad y generosidad en el servicio divino, y el prevenirnos contra la soberbia o vanagloria por las gracias recibidas. De su peso cae que el tiempo más adecuado para este examen es el de la quinta adición, ya que la desolación se dejará sentir o repercutirá durante las horas de meditación o contemplación.¹⁸

For Calveras, the examen after each period of prayer is crucial in the dynamic of the *Exercises* where one comes to realize that the movements of consolation and desolation are active. In the review of prayer, when one recognizes that there was consolation one is to thank God and make as much progress as possible while also prepare for the time of desolation, just as the rules of discernment propose. Thus, Calveras suggests that the examination of prayer is then an opportune moment to practice discernment.¹⁹

Calveras draws attention to the fact that the practice of the review of prayer achieves four things namely to know the fruits one gained, the personal effort, action of the good

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

¹⁹ “El tiempo de consolación es el más favorable para adelantar en el espíritu, y así interés nuestro ha de ser, que se alargue lo más posible. A este intento se endereza el dar gracias a Dios, si me ha ido bien en el ejercicio, y hacer otra vez de la misma manera [...]. Si queremos, pues que la consolación divina nos asista con la mayor frecuencia. Comencemos agradeciendo a Dios nuestro Señor, cuando el examen nos descubre que nos ha favorecido con ella en la oración [...]. El tiempo del examen de la oración es el más a propósito, para practicar las reglas de San Ignacio para este efecto [323, 324].” *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

spirit and the action of the evil spirit. As each prayer period has a general as well as a particular grace that one asks for, the examen looks at ‘how things have gone for me’ with regard to ‘what I wish for and desire’ and one sees if the general and particular fruits have been obtained.²⁰ The review of prayer is also a moment to see the personal effort, i.e. to see the cause of progress or deterioration in prayer by evaluating the spiritual dispositions.²¹ Similarly, these minutes immediately following meditation are also the time to examine the action of good spirit by looking for lights consolations or inspirations. Calveras considers such examen as the opportune time to look for illumination of understanding, some internal movements that caused the soul to be aflame with love for the Creator and Lord or the presence of some inspirations.²² Under the category of the action of evil spirit, Calveras places impediments, scruples, disguised good thoughts, and mistrust coupled with despair.²³ He insists on a thorough evaluation of the entire prayer period looking at these various aspects based on the rules of discernment as he warns: “nuestro enemigo, si no puede hacernos caer en pecados o faltas voluntarias, o traernos a lo menos perfecto, a lo menos procura turbarnos, inquietarnos y entristecernos con falsas razones, para volvernos pesada la vida espiritual, y al fin para llevarnos al desaliento y aun a la desesperación, si pudiese.”²⁴

²⁰ With regard to the general fruit, Calveras elaborates the following aspects: the desire and magnanimity with which one began, application of *tanto cuanto*, indifference, and so on. The particular fruit varies from week to week depending on the subject matter of the meditation. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 13-19.

²¹ “Al investigar la causa del retroceso o del adelanto en mis disposiciones espirituales, ante todo he de volver la mirada a mi trabajo propio, a cómo he hecho el ejercicio y cómo he cumplido todo lo que San Ignacio prescribe para hacerlo mejor hallar lo que se busca [73], atendiendo no sólo a la observancia material de la adiciones y anotaciones, sino también a si las he guardado según el espíritu de San Ignacio.” *Ibid.*, p. 20.

²² Under the third aspect of the action of good spirit Calveras puts together inspirations, lights or consolations that one may have experienced, inner motion of devotion, sense of thanksgiving, greater sense of submission to God’s action, etc. He also brings discovery of any inordinate attachment, detection of desolations for various reasons under this aspect. Calveras cites here the three criteria of discernment – the direction or goal, the effect or result produced and the way it enters the soul – as yardstick to evaluate the source of inspirations. See *ibid.*, pp. 22-28.

²³ “Por fin investigaré si el ángel malo se ha interpuesto descubierta o solapadamente en mi oración, para estorbar el fruto. Por examinar, en que no se haya tocado ya incidentalmente, quedan los impedimentos que pone, los escrúpulos, los buenos pensamientos engañosos que trae, y la desconfianza y desesperación a que induce.” *Ibid.*, p. 29.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

Commenting on the role of the particular examen within the *Exercises*, Calveras stresses the purifying role when he says,

el examen particular en las cuatro semanas de los Ejercicios se ha de hacer para quitar faltas y defectos en la práctica de cada uno de los ejercicios particulares, y negligencias en la guarda de las diez adiciones [90, 160, 207]. Su fin es mantener el interés preventivo general de hacer con toda perfección los Ejercicios y guardar con mucho cuidado todas las diez adiciones, al objeto de hacer mejor los mismos ejercicios y mejor hallar lo que se desea [73].²⁵

Within the exercises, the particular examen looks at the defects in doing the exercises and negligence with regard to the observation of the ten additions that are prescribed. This examen is to be done within the general examen, as in the *Spiritual Exercises*.

The general examen, within the *Exercises*, is done in order to cleanse oneself of the faults of the day since such faults could gradually take one away from the love of God.²⁶ In daily life Calveras proposes the examen as a means to persevere in the progress in spiritual life and he is clear about the role of particular and general examen: particular examen is to correct – directly or indirectly – specific faults or even to continue in good disposition that one has achieved.²⁷ Similarly, the general examen is done with the two-fold aim of cleansing oneself and of confessing better,²⁸ as says Calveras “las dos finalidades de este examen, según su título completo: “para limpiarse y mejor se confesar” [32], tienen continua aplicación después de Ejercicios; porque: a) es menester borrar del alma las faltas y pecados en que cada día caemos, pidiendo a Dios perdón de ellos una vez

²⁵ José Calveras, *Práctica de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio: explicación y comentario* (4ª ed.), Barcelona: Editorial Balmes, 1962, p. 105.

²⁶ “Las faltas culpables no solo en los ejercicios y en las adiciones, sino en los demás actos de piedad, y las generales en pensamientos, palabras y obras que se pueden cometer en tiempo de Ejercicios, [...]. Las faltas pueden poco a poco hacernos olvidar del amor del Señor eterno [65]. Este mismo examen puede servir de preparación para la confesión general al fin de la primera semana.” Ibid., pp. 112-113.

²⁷ “Cuando no existen actos externos desordenados que corregir, ni acometen interiormente sentimientos defectuosos que contrarrestar, todavía hay lugar para el examen particular, aplicándolo a mantener la presencia de espíritu, sin dejarse absorber por las ocupaciones ‘procurando siempre de tener la propia alma quieta, pacífica y dispuesta, para cuando el Señor quiera obrar en ella’.” Ibid., p. 504.

²⁸ Though in the section on the review of prayer Calveras talked about a thorough examination basing on discernment principles, here he maintains the traditional view which considers it as a preparation for confession.

a lo menos por la noche, [...] y b) la confesión frecuente, [...] se hace mejor, si diariamente se ha practicado con diligencia el examen general.”²⁹

3.2 Observations

From what we have seen about the writings of Calveras where he talks about review of prayer, particular examen and general examen we can conclude that he places greater importance on their overall role of purifying. For Calveras the examen is a moment of reflection on the movements of consolation and desolation. The general aim of such review of prayer is to find the cause of them and this is to be done based on the discernment principles. Thus, we can observe that though Calveras does not talk of the general examen as a moment of discernment, he emphasizes the importance of such reflection in Ignatian prayer. Though he considers the general examen as a means to purify oneself through confession, his emphasis is on means – this exercise aims to keep the progress made in spiritual life, and it is not a moralistic exercise. Hence, we can conclude that Calveras leans towards a spiritual examen.

4 Albert Görres and the Examen

Albert Görres was a German Jesuit who left his mark as professor of medicine and psychology. He was born in 1918 in Berlin. After completion of philosophy, he studied psychiatry and psychoanalysis. His area of interest was Freud’s works and later on he went on to introduce his own methods in psychoanalysis. He held the Chair of Psychology at Mainz from 1961 to 1966 and then became the director of the Institute of Psychology and Department of Applied Psychology at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU), Munich. In 1973 he became director of the Clinical Institute for Medical Psychology and Psychotherapy at the Medical Faculty of the Technical University (TU) Munich and worked in this capacity till his retirement in 1983. His book on Psychotherapy and

²⁹ Calveras, *Práctica de los Ejercicios*, p. 506.

Christianity,³⁰ where he deals with freedom of will and guilt, is well known.³¹ He died in 1996 in Munich.

4.1 Examen as Miniature Spiritual Exercise

In an article in 1956,³² Görres talked about the value of the Ignatian examination of conscience, terming it as the mode of prayer that Ignatius recommended most. He termed the examen as a daily-retreat where one looked for God. The basic proposal of Görres in the article is that one makes a retreat with the purpose to find God in all things which is possible in three spheres: things in the world, in the flesh of God and sacraments, and in the inner world. Similarly, the examen does in a given day what one does for a lifetime in the retreat – a close look at reality and the best ways to respond to it so as to find God. Just as during a retreat one ‘looks for God’ in those three spheres, in the practice of the examen one searches for God on a particular day:

lo que en los Ejercicios se relaciona con la decisión personal de vida de la que depende toda la realidad y todo el camino de salvación, tiene que concretarse “de hora en hora o de tiempo en tiempo” [43]. El resto no examina la realidad de todo el ser, sino la realidad de cada día, de cada hora, y así responde rectamente. El examen de conciencia se centra en el día y la hora, lo que en los *Ejercicios* equivale a la vida.³³

This is evident, points out Görres, when it is considered along with the prayer Contemplation to Attain Love [230ff.].

The central theme of the examen for Görres is gratitude – gratitude for all the communication of God:

esta acción de gracias como una inteligencia del ser o una justificación del ser se dirige en los Ejercicios a los distintos aspectos de la realidad. Esto muestra lo que la plenitud concreta de la acción de gracias debe fijarse en los distintos beneficios de Dios, cuando Él quiere mostrar su ser paso a paso. La acción de gracias de Ignacio no es una fórmula

³⁰ See Albert Görres – Karl Rahner, *Das Böse: Wege zu seiner Bewältigung in Psychotherapie und Christentum*, Freiburg: Herder, 1982.

³¹ His other works include *Métodos y experiencias del psicoanálisis*, Barcelona: Herder, 1963.

³² Albert Görres, “Über die Gewissensforschung nach der Weise des hl. Ignatius von Loyola,” in *Geist und Leben* 29 (1956) pp. 283-289. The translation of the text is ours (and thanks to Prof. Manuel Revuelta for the same).

³³ Görres, “Über die Gewissensforschung,” p. 284.

de cortesía. Ella obliga al que da las gracias siempre por la palabra; es una acción de gracias con amplias mangas, que nos entra por los ojos, que supera las gracias vacías para convertirlas en gracias auténticas, gracias *agere*, que se pueden palpar, pues “el amor se prueba con las obras, no con las palabras”.³⁴

Görres reiterates that the examen is nothing but a comprehensive summary of the whole of the *Exercises*. He points out that the first point of the examen – gratitude – has the entire spirituality of the *Exercises* summarized: “el punto primero de los cinco puntos del examen de conciencia, que no es otra cosa que una revisión diaria del contenido de todos los Ejercicios, un resumen meditativo con una mirada que resuma sus motivos fundamentales.”³⁵

Further, Görres considers that the first point of the examen is intimately linked to asking for an interior knowledge of all the benefits received during the day, just like one asks for this grace in a retreat [233]. The Contemplation to Attain Love offers what the *Exercises* envisions in a nutshell– attainment of love and finding God in all things, and the same is represented in the first point of the examen for the particular day. In the words of Görres:

la meditación es el resumen y la quintaesencia de los Ejercicios. Si nos preguntamos por su sentido, tal como es formulado en la oración preparatoria [233], se ve que el punto primero del examen de conciencia no es otra cosa que una representación y actualización de la meditación para alcanzar amor, y con ello una introspección sobre sí mismo en una frase que resume el fundamento de los Ejercicios: “pedir lo que quiero: será aquí pedir conocimiento interno de tanto bien recibido, para que yo enteramente reconociendo, pueda *en todo* amar y servir a su divina majestad”. La contemplación para alcanzar amor es por tanto enseñanza y explicación para el punto primero del examen de conciencia, y viceversa, el punto primero contiene una breve contemplación para alcanzar amor. El ejercicio de la acción de gracias en el sentido de la oración preparatoria es una manera estupenda de “hallar a Dios en todas las cosas”. (Esta frase suena dentro de los Ejercicios en la oración preparatoria de costumbre con toda claridad). El punto primero del examen de conciencia es (contiene) la espiritualidad de los *Ejercicios* en una palabra.³⁶

Thus, Görres insists that the examen and Contemplation to Attain Love are intimately connected.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 284.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 283.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 284-285.

Gratitude, for Görres, comes by reflecting on the things as gifts of God, and for this reason the first point of the examen should consider all the gifts of the particular day. This in concrete would mean to thank God for all the gifts like the sun, the rain, the consolation-desolation and so on.³⁷ Görres considers the examen as the opportune time to ask oneself, in indifference because all these are gifts, how one should respond to such gifts: “cuando el que da las gracias ha ponderado los sucesos de cada día, como beneficios recibidos de Dios, todavía se tiene que preguntar *cómo* esas cosas le son dadas como ayudas, y cómo él tiene que responder dando gracias por las cosas que son instrumentos de salvación.” This is precisely because the Principle and Foundation proposes the use of things ‘in so far as they help towards this end,’ [23] and therefore, “esta actitud de indiferencia, consciente del fin, renovada aquí y ahora, hace posible la elección en el uso de las cosas o en su rechazo, como un ejemplo de acción de gracias diaria, en el que se conoce rectamente la realidad del mundo, y se da la respuesta adecuada.”³⁸ For Görres this is the first of the spheres, namely finding God in the entire world.

The author of the article considers that, since encounter with God in the word of God is also an event of the day, this too enters in the sphere of the examen, and a sentiment of gratitude is created, just as in the *Suscipe* prayer [234]. For he says, “esta respuesta de acción de gracias, que abarca todo el ser, tiene que concretarse en el examen de la situación a cada hora para que se actualice en nuestro interior, porque el examen tiene que hallar y dar respuesta a la palabra actual de Dios.”³⁹ And this is due to the fact that the progress of a servant of God consists in contemplation as well as in the consideration of God present in the contemplation.⁴⁰

³⁷ “La primera manera de acción de gracias en el examen consiste en considerar y entender los sucesos del día como dones para la ayuda: sol y lluvia, consolación y desolación, contradicciones y tentaciones, alegría y tristeza, como sucede en el encuentro con la creación. O, según la expresión del Principio y Fundamento: salud o enfermedad, pobreza o riqueza, honor o deshonor, vida o muerte.”

³⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 285-286.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁴⁰ “Gran parte del verdadero progreso del servidor de Dios consiste en la contemplación y consideración de Dios en la oración y en la contemplación de su iluminación”. *Ibid.*, p. 287.

The third sphere, where God is to be found while one is examining, is in the movements of the soul and it is here that Görres lays importance to human conscience:

la realidad del mundo y la realidad de la palabra de Dios encuentran al hombre en el centro de su conciencia. Por eso tienen gran importancia las *motiones animae*, los movimientos del alma, con los que el hombre encuentra la realidad. La reflexión sobre la propia vida, que Ignacio enseña, no es un círculo sobre el propio yo. Es una búsqueda de Dios totalmente teocéntrica, que Él realiza en los movimientos del alma y quiere que encontremos tanto en nosotros mismos como en todas las cosas.⁴¹

Görres observes that the discerning principles offered by Ignatius – rules based on which some things are accepted or rejected – are the fulcrum of any guiding process or shaping of the soul because they deal with “la necesidad de tomar conciencia de las mociones del alma dentro de sí mismo (*sentire*), de conocerlas y entenderlas (*cognoscere*), para aceptarlas o rechazarlas (*ut suscipiantur, ut reiiciantur*) [313].”⁴² Therefore, the rules of discernment come into play at the examen as well.

Making sense of the psychological impulses, accepting/encouraging or rejecting/suppressing are the basis of what Görres calls the theological developmental psychology, and hence these principles are at work in the examen. “El lugar de tales reflexiones de las mociones del alma está una vez más en el examen. En él experimenta el hombre qué espíritus son los que hoy le mueven. El hombre da gracias por los bienes recibidos, y se deja conducir y alentar por ellos, y sigue sus impulsos. Él da gracias por los males sobre los que tiene que decidir y los que debe superar.”⁴³ Görres, while pointing out that in human psyche there are mechanisms to accept or reject elements, warns that there are some complexities that make distinction of spirits difficult. Therefore, spontaneous reactions, affections and anguish are all experienced in the psyche and it is in the examen that one looks which spirit has moved him/her. Thus, Görres when affirms that in the examen a reworking of the psychic motions is possible, he lays emphasis on the third sphere, of conscience, of movements in the soul.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 287.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 288.

4.2 Observations

Though Görres is a psychoanalyst, what calls our attention is the fact that his interpretation of the examen is clearly spiritual. He draws from the principles of psychology to highlight the importance of observing movements within the soul. By presenting gratitude as the engine of the examen Görres establishes a direct link between this exercise and the Contemplation to Attain Love. For him, then, the examen is a miniature spiritual exercise where the effort is to find the presence of God in daily events and activities. It is clear from our analysis that the focus of the examen is not sins, rather the orientation is toward finding the presence of God in all that has taken place in the period prior to this exercise, which includes the prayer period and the subsequent illumination. For him, then, the examen is not a self-observation, rather a theocentric activity where one observes what moves the person from within. Görres conceives this spiritual practice as a moment of examining one's conscience where God acts and this is done in order to observe movements produced daily. By alluding to the rules of discernment in examining such movements of the soul, Görres makes it amply clear that for him this exercise is one of spiritual discernment.

5 Antoine Delchard and the Examen

Antoine Delchard was the tertian instructor at Saint Martin near Rheims, France. Here we analyse two of his articles to appreciate his contribution to the present understanding of the examen. These articles clearly of 1957 and 1960 point to a different direction from his contemporaries.

5.1 Daily Choices and the Examen

In an article titled 'Election in Daily Life,'⁴⁴ Antoine Delchard talked about the examen as an exercise that help maintain an attitude of election throughout the day. Amidst

⁴⁴ Antoine Delchard, "L'élection dans la vie quotidienne," in *Christus* 14 (1957) pp. 206-219.

the noise of everyday occupations, the examen creates an atmosphere of tranquillity that allows greater submission and availability to God, as Delchard puts it:

la tradition spirituelle a toujours cru possible une soumission à Dieu et une réalisation de ce que nous avons décidé sous son regard. L'attitude de l'élection se maintient au fil des jours grâce à l'exercice qui a reçu le nom d'examen de conscience. Quels que soient la surcharge des occupations et l'accablement qui parfois nous envahissent, il reste indispensable de se replacer devant Dieu dans une attitude de disponibilité totale.⁴⁵

He is of the opinion that the greater the pace of one's lives, greater the need to depend on this exercise to make oneself available for God's actions. Here we analyse his article in order to better understand him.

5.1.1 Memory of Gratitude

Calling the examen as an exercise of the memory, Delchard insists on its usefulness of and terms it as the moment to recognize God's presence in one's life. For him, then, God is to be found in retrospect:

faire l'examen de sa vie, c'est encore se remettre en mémoire, comme une toile de fond qui demeure tandis que les personnages se succèdent, l'état de vie que nous avons choisi ou du moins celui est le nôtre, aujourd'hui, et qu'il n'est plus en notre pouvoir de changer [...]. Car, petites ou grandes, nombreuses ou rares, les étoiles qui brillent sur nos vies sont déjà présence de Dieu; et la seule maniere de le trouver aujourd'hui, c'est de le chercher, en lui rendant grâces de ce passé rempli de nos erreurs et de nos péchés et à travers lequel il nous a lui-même conduit et aimé.⁴⁶

When Delchard says that it is impossible to comprehend the present day and God without referring to the past graces, he underlines the role of memory as well as the importance of considering all the events of life; the series of events that lead to a choice is equally important because they reveal the language of God.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 206.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 207-208.

⁴⁷ Delchard here insists on the importance of observing the events unfolded in order to find out the language of God that is employed. "Il en est de même avec Dieu: tout n'est pas chaque jour à recommencer et les signes qu'il nous donne aujourd'hui sont clairs, si nous nous reportons à la langue qu'il s'est accoutumé à utiliser avec nous." Ibid., p. 208. It is noteworthy that this refers to the rules of discernment of Ignatius that talks of 'examining the whole course of thoughts' [333].

In the examination of conscience an analysis of such language of God is what takes place and Delchard points out that this does not require much time, but rather a continuous attention of faith:

Disponibilité, acceptation paisible de l'état de vie, souvenir des grâces reçues et de l'inspiration personnelle de notre existence ne sont que l'introduction à l'examen [...]. Il parle, ce soir, dans notre mécontentement et notre révolte, il parle dans la joie frelatée dont le mauvais goût reste dans notre bouche, il s'explique dans une paix secrète, sans commune mesure avec le fracas qui nous entoure [...]. Il s'agit plutôt d'une attention continue de la foi à cet Autre avec qui nous vivons sans cesse, en qui nous nous mouvons et en qui nous sommes.⁴⁸

Such an examination, far from being a sickly introspection, involves an act of faith vision. There is need for continual attention because 'God is inseparable from the world he created and the humanity he has redeemed;' God who is Spirit is alive and active, and is not limited only to our daily action of field. Such a look at God, argues Delchard, is far from creating humans as wretched miserable and resists making God as an idol.⁴⁹

5.1.2 God First

Urging that every day – and if possible every moment – one should return to God, Delchard proposes the examen as a means to progress in spiritual life – progress as a constant effort to keep God first in one's life.

Lorsque, dans l'examen, nous cherchons à confronter le présent avec le passé ou le passé récent à un passé plus lointain, nous devons nous demander: Dieu est-il davantage le maître de ma vie? C'est à cette première question que toutes les autres se rattachent; c'est à elle, au bout du compte, qu'elles doivent se ramener. La dépossession progressive de nous-mêmes pour que Notre Seigneur fasse de nous ce qu'il voudra, se serve de nous dans son dessein salvifique, nous fasse agir à chaque heure dans le sens et de la manière qu'il voilà ce sur quoi il faut nous interroger.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Delchard, "L'élection dans," p. 209.

⁴⁹ "Tout ce qui vient d'être décrit n'est rien d'autre qu'une mise en présence de Dieu, mais d'un Dieu inseparable du monde qu'il crée et de l'humanité qu'il a rachetée. Si nous craignons de regarder si haut et si loin, c'est que d'ordinaire ce Dieu auquel nous souhaitons tous nous rendre attentifs, n'est qu'une caricature de notre misérable personne. Si nous sommes effrayés de l'ampleur de champ que doit posséder le moindre de nos examens, c'est que notre Dieu n'est point l'Esprit qui habite l'univers et se recueille pourtant en chacun de nous; il est une idole que nous nous sommes fabriquée et qui ne résistera pas aux flammes de l'action ou à celles du jugement divin." Ibid., pp. 210-211.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 211.

Keeping God first is to be done daily, and Delchard elaborates why daily control is needed when he says “mais, à mesure que l’on chemine dans la fidélité à Dieu, on se rend compte qu’il doit être consulté sur tout, que seuls nous ne pouvons rien choisir ni déterminer. Il nous faut retrouver sans cesse la direction globale qu’il a donnée à nos vies et les juger à cette lumière, mais il faut également introduire dans ce courant unique tous les détails de nos existences, tous les secteurs de notre personnalité. C’est pourquoi un contrôle quotidien est nécessaire.”⁵¹

5.1.3 God-First Through Purity of Heart

Delchard highlights purity of heart as an important objective of the examen which would lead to progress in spiritual life. Purity of heart is achieved not for its own sake:

car sans cela Dieu ne peut utiliser les sentiments intérieurs pour nous suggérer ce qu’il attend de nous. C’est pour lui qu’il faudra affiner nos consciences et ne tolérer en elles aucune ombre de péché; pour lui qu’il faudra découvrir les défauts ou les manques qui, sans être des péchés, sont cependant des entraves à la vie apostolique, parce que ces taches en viennent à voiler le visage du Christ que nous devons révéler aux autres.⁵²

Such correction of deficiencies has to be done daily by sifting through the entire day when they are revealed in the examen. This type of examen then is different from other means of observations in the sense that “on remarque seulement, quand Dieu le veut et comme il le veut, l’établissement de plus en plus profond et de plus en plus large de son Royaume en nous. Parce que ce sont les progrès de la grâce, nous ne les devinons et ne les percevons que dans une attitude de perpétuel respect.”⁵³ Such observation will make possible a greater disposition by making one’s desires attune to that of God.

This type of disposition and spiritual choice is made not in ‘some unattainable plans’ but in ‘simple, concrete matters,’ “le contrôle de notre progrès spirituel, [...] n’est donc possible et sain que si nos choix se traduisent perpétuellement de la manière la plus

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 212.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 212-213.

concrete et la plus particulière.”⁵⁴ Such realistic view⁵⁵ of spiritual progress calls for vigilance, and similar to chopping off the branches from tree that hinder its own growth, correction of faults that may be present are needed: “cette vigilance de chaque jour nous conduira à découvrir en nous des formes de péchés et des sources de péchés que nous ne soupçonnions pas” because “le plus souvent, nous ne savons pas de quelles souillures est rempli notre cœur, tant que nous ne les avons pas vu apparaître dans nos gestes.”⁵⁶ Since it is impossible to overcome the enemy once-for-all, there is possibility of falling back into sin even after purification and thus Delchard insists on recalling God’s grace daily during the examen. Thus, in the daily examen one enters into a movement of the soul that rejoices at nothingness, at the recognition that one is a sinner yet invited by God in great compassion, which is indeed spiritual progress.

Insisting that all the decisions must be taken in the context of such examen Delchard says,

il nous faut entrer chaque jour dans ce mouvement de l’âme qui se réjouit de découvrir un peu mieux son néant afin d’accéder à la paix que Dieu seul peut donner en Jésus-Christ. [...] pour maintenir cette ouverture vers un avenir que nous ne connaissons pas et que nous attendons de déterminer avec Dieu, pour permettre à Dieu de nous établir dans son équilibre et dans son ordre, en d’autres termes pour unir de manière indissoluble la vulnérabilité incesante avec la paix, une vigilance de tous les instants est nécessaire.⁵⁷

For Delchard, Christian freedom and dialogue with God go hand in hand and the examen becomes the moment where such an encounter takes place, when “car c’est dans le climat de l’examen, [...] que doivent être prises toutes nos décisions quotidiennes. Il n’y a pas en effet de liberté chrétienne, si la présence de Dieu et le dialogue avec Dieu ne se poursuivent incessamment; il n’y a pas de liberté chrétienne sans un combat de chaque heure ou l’affrontement avec le mal contraint à la mort et à la mort de la Croix.”⁵⁸ Finally, Delchard considers the examen as a daily exercise that helps live such spirituality of translating the joy of Christ into every sphere of human action, as he puts it, “l’examen n’est qu’une

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 213.

⁵⁵ Delchard reminds that Ignatius was realistic when he talked about the particular examen with its methodical observation of some particular defect. See *ibid.*, footnote 1 on p. 214.

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 214, 215.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 217-218.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 219

manière d'éclairer sous un nouvel angle cette spiritualité où s'unissent indissolublement prière et action, où se confondent la contemplation de Dieu et l'œuvre entreprise pour son service, le dialogue respectueux avec sa majesté et la participation à son travail éternel."⁵⁹

5.2 Spiritual Progress and the Examen

The *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, in 1960, treats the examen under the entry "Examen de Conscience" where it deals with the subject under the subheadings a) Antiquity and non-Christian religions, b) in the Bible, c) Among the Fathers of the Church, d) in the Christian Tradition in the Modern Times and e) Spiritual Synthesis. And we focus our attention only on the synthesis, without going through the entire article.⁶⁰

Synthesizing all that had been said prior to it, in the last section Delchard insists that the examen should not be a mere practice of asceticism; that is to say, though the opening statement of the *Spiritual Exercises* talks of the Exercises as 'every way of examining,' the true significance of the Ignatian examen goes beyond a methodical practice to know one's faults. Delchard terms the examen as a spiritual activity through which one cooperates in the divine work and follows the will of God:

lorsqu'on veut marquer ce qui est propre à l'examen, on le décrit souvent comme étant une pratique d'ascèse individuelle, méthodique et contrôlée, permettant à l'homme de se connaître, de prendre conscience de ses fautes et d'établir sa responsabilité de se disposer par une sincère contrition au pardon de Dieu, d'organiser en retour sa vie avec prudence en vue d'un progrès moral et spirituel. L'idée de base de saint Ignace est plus large. Il parle de "toute manière d'examiner" ce qui doit rendre attentif à la diversité des objets de l'examen, de ses formes pratiques et de sa fin prochaine. Il le situe parmi les activités spirituelles qui, étant prière et coopération libre à l'œuvre divine en l'homme et dans le monde, portent à vivre en pleine conformité de la volonté avec celle de Dieu, ce qui est ici-bas service et amour. Acte d'ascèse personnelle, il tend à dégager l'âme du péché et à purifier le cœur et l'esprit, mais il est en son fond acte de vie en Dieu.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Each of these sections is written by different authors namely, Hasso Jaeger, Jacques Guillet, Jean-Claude Guy, Ireneé Noye and Antoine Delchard respectively. Cf. "Examen de Conscience" in *DSp.* vol. IV, pp. 1789-1838. Though this entry is a composite work of multiple authors, we make reference to the final section 'Conclusion spirituelle' as this captures the Ignatian idea better and when we cite Delchard under this entry we refer to this last part, pp. 1831-1838.

⁶¹ Antoine Delchard, "Examen," in *DSp.* vol. IV, pp. 1831-1832.

Delchard observes that taking the daily as well as the particular examen, in their proper context, clearly point not just to conversion but also to spiritual progress. He points out that the examen would seem to propose a narrow concept when taken out of context, but when taken together, point to spiritual progress, it is efficient and with profound implications.⁶²

5.2.1 Christian Moral Conscience

Terming the examen as a natural and supernatural spiritual activity, Delchard identifies the examen as a moment when the moral conscience is exercised fully. It is not a recalling of the actions that have already been done, nor a mere introspection of one's action, but, he argues, moves beyond to the realm of moral conscience. For he says:

il n'est pas pure présence à soi-même ou simple recueillement, attention plus ou moins pénétrante aux actes extérieurs ou aux mouvements de l'esprit et du cœur, effort d'introspection ou étude intelligente de la vie intérieure. Il n'est pas la seule connaissance de soi qui permet de se gouverner, ni la recherche d'un idéal de vie qui se dévoilerait au sage scrutant l'intime de son être. Il implique bien un retour sur soi, une évocation du passé une attention à la réalité intérieurement vécue, voulue ou subie, une réflexion sur soi, un regard sur l'avenir, mais il suppose un éveil et une mise en activité de la conscience morale.⁶³

From such an examen it follows, points out Delchard, that there is a clear knowledge of one's acts, the choices one makes, judgments made based on one's conscience, and so on. When such examination is done regularly, there is greater adherence to moral laws and creates a sense of authentic values.

L'examen implique connaissance concrète de ce qui, en nous et par nous, a été, est et peut être considération d'attribution personnelle et de la responsabilité, jugement de valeur à la lumière des normes de la vie morale et donc d'approbation ou de condamnation, recherche d'une décision à prendre et disposition de la volonté à agir. Eclairée et bien formée, la conscience, par des examens fréquents fait adhérer intérieurement aux lois morales et assumer aussi librement que possible les obligations de la vie. Cette pratique régulière, intelligente et prudente, parce qu'elle rend l'homme à la fois plus intérieur et plus ouvert, contribue à la connaissance et à la maîtrise de soi, donne le sens des authentiques valeurs et de la responsabilité personnelle, libère de certaines passions

⁶² "Ces normes s'adressent certes à celui qui veut, non seulement se convertir, mais progresser dans la vie spirituelle. Cependant l'examen, dans la lumière des *Exercices spirituels* faits en leur entier, apparaît riche de virtualités plus amples et appelé à une efficacité plus profonde." Ibid., p. 1832.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 1832.

sociales ou intimes, équilibre les forces de l'âme et favorise la décision libre. Elle conduit l'homme à sa maturité spirituelle.⁶⁴

Through such a process of self-knowledge, of taking responsibility for one's actions and realizing one's values people gain spiritual maturity.

Delchard is quick to point out that the ancient philosophers too advocated the examination⁶⁵ and the Stoics advocated a strong moral life, especially through asceticism and examination of oneself. Elaborating the difference, Delchard says that through the examen a philosopher knows himself whereas a Christian, through grace, discovers another self as well as the one who is *intimior intimo meo* and prays to the Father who sees everything in secret.⁶⁶ The Philosopher recalls his actions, perceives the world with his desires and then makes *his own* judgment based on his moral ideals. The Christian, on the other hand, makes his examination against the forgiveness of God; though at the moment of the examen he has his sins and weakness in front of him, it is the forgiving love of 'one who searches the loins and hearts' that becomes the criteria. The Christian therefore bases himself on faith and not on his own moral principles. The Christian approaches God in humility, a humility that comes from Christ, and when examen is engaged in this direction one is focused and attentive to God. In such examen it is not oneself who is important but God, i.e. it does not make one glance at oneself first but helps contemplate God first.⁶⁷

Further, pointing out that Ignatius never gave a theoretical discourse on the examen but talked of it in the course of the Spiritual Exercises – not in the narrow context of

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 1832-1833.

⁶⁵ Delchard points out that though Christianity has drawn inspiration from this ancient source of wisdom, yet the outlook is different from that of philosophers. For more on this see *ibid.* p. 1833.

⁶⁶ "Un élément essentiel intervient en effet dans la conception et la pratique de l'examen chrétien, élément qui découle directement de la révélation toujours plus pleine et transformante de Dieu par Dieu aux hommes, avant le Christ au peuple juif et par le Christ. Dans et par l'examen le philosophe païen se connaît, mais lui seul, même si, disciple de Plotin, il prétend s'assimiler progressivement à la divinité; le chrétien par grâce découvre un autre lui-même, celui qui est "intimior intimo meo" et il prie le Père "qui voit dans le secret" (Mt. 6:6)." *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ "Il ne fait pas tout d'abord plonger le regard sur soi-même pour le porter ensuite vers Dieu, mais contempler le Seigneur et écouter sa parole. Dans cette lumière, l'homme peut se voir tel qu'il est et se fait. Dans la vérité, il naît à l'humilité de la créature et du pécheur, goûte le repentir intérieur et s'ouvre au pardon. Par l'examen, l'homme répond à l'appel premier de Dieu qui veut qu'on le regarde et que l'on se regarde en lui, que l'on s'avoue pécheur et que, espérant tout de lui, on demeure en lui." *Ibid.*, pp. 1833-1834.

confession, but in the totality of the *Exercises*⁶⁸— the examen is to lead people to God. And this is possible for anyone who searches for Him and to looks for His will: “c’est dans l’expérience vécue ensuite au long des années par une âme qui cherche, trouve par l’élection, même quotidienne, la volonté concrète de Dieu et y adhère par amour, qu’il situe la pratique de l’examen.”⁶⁹ And in this search for God’s will, a spiritual director too plays a crucial role.

5.2.2 Ascetical and Spiritual Practice

Delchard through his analysis clearly shows that the examen as presented in the *Exercises* is both ascetical and spiritual: it is a classical examen where moral conscience is addressed and at the same time, it is a spiritual exercise since it is a prayer.

Il est fait en vue d’une confession générale ou ordinaire, plus encore il est exercice d’ascèse régulier, normalement quotidien. Il met en œuvre toutes nos puissances naturelles, et il est prière en tous ses moments, car il est demande de grâces de lumière, de contrition et de force, retour attentif à Dieu dans la foi et par amour, humble accueil des dons et notamment du pardon divin, adhésion obéissante à la volonté de Dieu.⁷⁰

It is a recollection and a prayer and hence not limited to a knowledge of oneself or self-observation that focuses on faults, but rather makes one see and wish in God.⁷¹ Such prayer introduces one to true knowledge and humility; this type of knowledge is not for the sake of knowing but for greater purity of the heart, a purity that comes as grace of God.

Delchard talks precisely about such purity of intentions and various movements as the subject matter of the examen when he says

au delà des rêves qui illusionnent et des sentiments qui se jouent en nous, il introduit dans la vérité et l’humilité. Il est voulu, non pas seulement en vue d’une connaissance de soi loyale, mais pour que les sens, l’esprit et le cœur soient purifiés par la grâce. Il porte sur les obstacles, externes ou intimes, en premier lieu sur le péché, et conduit à l’aveu sincère.

⁶⁸ It is noteworthy that in more than one occasion Delchard talks about not limiting the examen to narrow limits, but to look at the overall context of the *Exercises*. See *ibid.*, pp. 1833, 1834.

⁶⁹ Delchard, “Examen,” p. 1834.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ “Il ne se limite pas à la connaissance de soi. Il n’est pas repliement sur soi: il est recueillement, car l’âme dans le respect se situe sous le regard de Dieu. Il n’est pas une minutieuse enquête qui va se concluant par le douloureux constat de fautes ou qui provoque un énergique sursaut de la volonté: il fait voir et vouloir en Dieu.” *Ibid.* p. 1835.

Il fait plonger le regard jusqu'à la misère de fond, car il fait mesurer la responsabilité de nos actes, il doit pénétrer jusqu'à ces motivations complexes et masqués, ces intentions ou attaches désordonnées, ces passions profondes qu'impliquent plus ou moins nos fautes. La vraie pureté d'esprit et de cœur est à ce prix. L'examen atteint donc la vie profonde, pour y discerner la réalité de notre comportement humain en nous, dans le monde, au milieu des hommes. Il fait voir l'homme que l'on veut être, accepter celui que l'on est avec ses faiblesses, sa misère, mais aussi ses qualités, sa valeur personnelle.⁷²

Such discerning of the movements and the recognition of one's true identity takes place in faith, and Delchard argues that it is precisely hope and love encountered in the examen that give rise to repentance just as the will to rectify the damages done.

5.2.3 Leading to Spiritual Maturity

Delchard is clear that when the examination is about discerning of movements, where one is able to accept one's weakness yet moves forward in hope, it is the beginning of spiritual maturity. According to him, in an examen there develops a relation to the sacrament of reconciliation which impels one to greater self-acceptance.

L'examen donne ainsi le sens authentique du péché et fait répondre à l'incessant appel à la pénitence, pénitence qui, par la conversion de notre être vers Dieu, détruit en nous le péché et nous fait adhérer au Christ. Il fait à chacun porter la croix de ses péchés, entrer dans le mystère de mort du Seigneur pour ressusciter avec lui, participer donc à la croix de Jésus. De là sa relation prochaine ou virtuelle avec le sacrement de pénitence, non seulement parce qu'il prépare un aveu intègre, mais parce qu'il unit à l'amour du Père qui en son Fils aime et pardonne. Dans la vie, il développe le sens de la responsabilité personnelle et travaille à rendre vraiment libre. Dans l'action, il éclaire et montre les conditions d'une efficacité véritable, développe la maîtrise de soi en mettant dans la vérité et en engageant à la faire. Il serait facile de développer ces quelques indications. Il importe cependant de souligner combien l'examen fait accéder l'homme à une solide maturité spirituelle.⁷³

The author thus argues that an examen understood in this way leads to maturity by the development of affectivity and by disengaging from guilt complex. In other words, there is the need to overcome infantile aggressions and similar feelings – the refusal to accept oneself as sinful gives way to an acceptance; the subtle excuses and justifications give way to forgiveness, and so on, and this takes place in humility and grace. In this manner, the

⁷² Ibid., pp. 1834-1835.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 1835.

daily examen prepares one to the reception of the sacrament of penance and when this happens more as a daily spiritual exercise, it paves way for a harmonious progress.⁷⁴

Delchard affirms the centrality of cooperation with God when he insists that ‘sin and its causes are not the sole object of the examen but as purification.’ For him, then, the examen is ‘an instrument of free cooperation in the work of God that is being realised in and through us.’ Precisely because of this freedom, particular examen is to be used to see how well nature and grace are operative in us: “pour beaucoup il conduira à l’examen particulier. Pour tous il doit aider à mettre en valeur les forces naturelles et les dons divins. Il apprend à prévoir, à décider avec prudence, à vouloir avec patience et générosité. Il portera donc aussi sur la pratique des vertus considérées tant dans leur développement intime que dans les actes extérieurs, vertus théologiques aussi bien que morales, sur le devoir d’état ou sur tel acte important.”⁷⁵ The author believes that this exercise has application mainly in daily life and it has much use in the context of an annual retreat as well.⁷⁶

Delchard further elaborates that as one progresses in spiritual life, the examen adopts a different approach, one that moves from purification to a finer vigilance: “selon les étapes d’une vie intérieure en progrès, l’examen est appelé à prendre des caractères qui répondent et à l’appel de Dieu et aux besoins de l’âme. Il reste un exercice, requiert le recueillement de l’esprit et la garde du cœur, dégage du péché et rend plus libre, grâce à une purification profonde, mais il tend à devenir toujours plus l’expression d’une vie de foi attentive et vigilante.”⁷⁷ In such attentiveness to the living presence of God, the examen helps people to look beyond continuity of actions so as to gain simplicity and inner unity. While humility is accomplished in active and total love, purity of heart that was achieved

⁷⁴ “En effet, l’examen bien compris conduit l’homme à l’âge adulte en développant normalement son affectivité et en le débarrassant en particulier de tout complexe de culpabilité. Il fait dépasser les attitudes infantiles de crainte ou de révolte, dissipe peu à peu le sentiment de souillure ou les manifestations plus ou moins agressives et douloureuses d’un orgueil qui refuse de se reconnaître pécheur [...]. L’examen, en tant que préparation d’une réception du sacrement de pénitence et surtout en tant qu’exercice spirituel journalier, est ainsi un instrument de progrès fort et harmonieux.” Ibid., p. 1835.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Delchard observes here that the examen is a spiritual exercise that can be practiced usually daily life but can be done in retreat context as well. In such cases, he advocates adaptation according to the objectives, not being rigid with the method but to be flexible. See *ibid.*, p. 1836.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1836.

in the earlier stage paves way for this kind of sensibility. In the same breath Delchard warns, “l’examen qui ne sera pas le seul acte d’un moment du jour, mais s’actualisera avec souplesse au long des heures du jour, peut de soi répondre aux exigences d’une vie ainsi en progrès.”⁷⁸

Recalling the two fundamentals of spiritual life – understanding of the operations of God in the soul and the cooperation of the soul with grace – Delchard insists that the examen plays a crucial role in the interplay of these two elements, and he falls back on Lallemand who had taught in the similar lines.⁷⁹ The interiority of a person in progress desires to possess God and be possessed by Him and readily accepts the purification that comes from God. Such a person

il est vivant de Dieu et veut vivre pour Dieu. L’examen va le situer par grâce dans la présence vivante et agissante de Dieu autant qu’il est possible ici-bas. Il restera un exercice, une activité personnelle priante, qui remet l’homme entre les mains de Dieu pour accomplir l’œuvre de Dieu. L’examen va ainsi répondre à sa fin la plus profonde: il fait vouloir et accueillir la purification jusqu’au plus intime de l’esprit et du cœur, jusqu’à la perte de soi et fait, par la docilité à la grâce, vivre et agir en Dieu.⁸⁰

For Delchard, such an examen implies a constant attitude of total availability and an awareness of who we are and how we have to live and act. Delchard has no doubt that the examen begins by an act of gratitude for all the gifts of God.

Il s’amorce dans l’action de grâces, car tout est don et ce que nous disons heureux ou malheureux s’inscrit dans le dessein de Dieu. Il rend présent à celui qui est vivant et agissant en nous comme dans le monde, attentif à tout signe, extérieur ou intime, de sa volonté, afin de les discerner et d’accomplir la tâche réelle du jour, non pas celle d’hier pour la regretter vainement, ni celle de demain pour la rêver.⁸¹

He also points out that such an examen does not ignore the sin but gives a fuller view of it and presents the disorder and death it provokes; it helps identify what real life is: “il fait avouer les faiblesses et les lâchetés cachées, reconnaître les imperfections et sentir la

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Here Delchard quotes Luis Lallemand (*Spiritual Doctrine*, p. 5/ch.1.1) saying one of the occupations of the interior is to examine and to recognize especially three things in our interior and then to discern what is of God and what is of demon. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 1836.

⁸⁰ Delchard, “Examen,” p. 1837.

⁸¹ Ibid.

misère. C'est en Dieu que la conscience s'avive et s'exprime, pèse le poids de sa responsabilité personnelle."⁸² One stands confused before God, yet is able to see the love of God that seeks purity and holiness and this makes him/her to respond, from the depth of his soul, to find the will of God.

Examination of conscience thus is an exercise of dialogue with God, a prayer that leads one closer to God. It is a practical prayer that creates a continual attention to God, makes one feel one's own littleness and the greatness of God. An attitude of faithfulness and vigilance, according to Delchard, leads to union with God because everything is simplified and unified in faith. "L'examen conduit à ainsi l'union a Dieu, en laquelle Dieu est premier, et que l'homme doit personnellement vouloir. Voie où la réponse libre au dessein divin provoque toutes nos énergies pour lutter contre le mal et nous renoncer. Voie où la fidélité à l'instant que Dieu nous donne à vivre, en se fondant sur l'espérance, prépare la fidélité de demain."⁸³ Moreover, it creates a love that leads to service in the Church. Such daily examen, coupled with a sincere and yet flexible particular examen leads to action, "il affectionne à l'œuvre de Dieu et pour Dieu et en ce sens il es une prière pratique. Il fait agir, mais il n'est pas l'action."⁸⁴ Thus, for Delchard the examen is a necessary spiritual exercise that is clearly personal, so as to answer what God asks of each person, in purity and freedom to do His will.

5.3 Observations

Delchard dealt with the examen in the two articles, written within a three-year span, where he maintains that this exercise is more than mere asceticism. He sustains that the examen is the means par excellence to maintain an attitude of election in daily life and we have seen that, in order to choose God daily, one needs to purify himself/herself constantly. Memory of all the blessings of God in the past becomes the ambit of such prayer and this serves in order to be attuned to the language of God. By insisting on the sense of availability and constant attention, Delchard points out that the examen is far from sickly introspection.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Returning to God every moment is important to him, and in this regard the examen is presented as a means to purify all that hinders spiritual growth. Docility, purity of hearts, vigilance against possible sins, paying attention to daily movements of the soul, and such similar vocabulary clearly points to a discerning vision of the examen that connects to finding God daily.

In similar lines, the article in the *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité* treats the examen as a means to grow in moral conscience, in an atmosphere of greater freedom and responsibility. By contrasting it with the idea of philosophers Delchard clearly argues that the examen is a spiritual activity, to be done under the gaze of God. By pointing out that Ignatius conceived the examen in the larger context of the Exercises, Delchard affirms that the examen is primarily an experience of God, of a soul that seeks God in daily election. We have seen that the author, while acknowledging the ascetical value of the examen, highlights the role this exercise in discerning the human reality. For him, such a prayer clearly leads to spiritual maturity through cooperation with God, in responding to God's call, or in collaborating with the grace of God. Delchard advocates the five-step method of Ignatius while urging flexibility in adapting this exercise.⁸⁵ We have also seen the many arguments that Delchard gave to support that this examen leads one to union with God – examen as an exercise of dialogue with God and as a prayer that makes one close to God. Delchard clearly thinks that “l'examen est en réalité nécessaire après chaque action importante, après chacun des choix qui engagent sérieusement la vie personnelle ou la vie apostolique. Il faudrait même affirmer que l'examen n'est pas un exercice déterminé, mais qu'il doit rythmer notre vie de prière pour la contrôler, notre vie active pour en percevoir la direction.”⁸⁶ Hence, Delchard leaves no doubt that the examen is indeed an exercise of spiritual discernment.

⁸⁵ While proposing the five-point examen, Delchard seems also open to other similar ideas when he suggests other devotional practices like praying with the Five Wounds of Jesus or Psalms. Some questionnaire on possible faults or on virtues could also aid in this exercise. Cf. Delchard, “Examen,” p. 1837.

⁸⁶ Delchard, “L'élection dans,” p. 212.

6 Roy Howard's Examen

The *Woodstock Letters* were addressed primarily to Jesuits as well as to their collaborators in the North American Jesuit provinces as we have seen earlier, and an article from such context on the importance of the examen deserves our consideration. Drawing inspiration from the article of Antoine Delchard,⁸⁷ Roy Howard in his article of 1959 terms the examination of conscience as a prayerful election in everyday terms.⁸⁸

For Howard, the way to understand the mind of Ignatius was not by looking only at the *Exercises*, but other places where Ignatius used the term examen to mean reflection.⁸⁹ And such reflection, according to Howard, has three characteristics: it is prayerful, it is prayerful in a special way, and it has a particular relation to all the other occupations. We study them here below.

6.1 The Examen is a Prayer

While affirming that Ignatius had not invented the examination of conscience, Howard points out that Ignatius' first experience of the examen was indeed in the context of the sacrament of penance. However, "the examination of conscience assumes importance because, in Ignatius' eyes, the sacrament of penance assumes a new and important role in the ascetical life. Not only that, the examen has reference to holy communion as well. It was a characteristically Ignatian thing [...] that Ignatius should advise an examination of conscience as the first of those means which create the dispositions of soul desired for the reception of the Eucharist."⁹⁰ Howard is of the opinion that the examination of conscience assumed a new significance and became genuinely a part of liturgical prayer because it opens the heart to receive God as He comes to us in the sacrament. The uniqueness of the

⁸⁷ See our section on Delchard above.

⁸⁸ Roy J. Howard, "Examination of Conscience: Prayerful Election in Everyday Terms," in *Woodstock Letters* 88 (1959) pp. 24-36.

⁸⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 25. "In the first place, we discover that St. Ignatius does not give the word examen only to one clearly defined practice, but to a good half-dozen varied practices scattered over different times and designed for different needs. The common thread running through them all is reflection, the reflection of a Basque gentleman grown serious for a moment and pondering in great calm the situation at hand."

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

examen lies in the fact that it is in itself a method of prayer, the First Method of Prayer [238-258]. Further, “it is a mixture of reflection upon the state of one's soul, of meditation, and of vocal prayer. It is an easy form of prayer, consisting simply of the commandments or capital sins, in making on each one a short examination of conscience, in asking pardon each time and saying an Our Father.”⁹¹

Howard points out that the examination of conscience, more than being merely a prelude to the reception of sacraments, has a wider usage and has a special appeal for all since it serves as a bridge to further stages of prayer. And

unless the examination of conscience be itself a prayer, it is empty of meaning. Knowledge of sins is a grace and must be prayed for. Contrition is a grace and must be prayed for. One might, outside of grace, draw up extensive catalogues of moral failures and store up moving phrases to tell them with, but if some glimmering of the holiness of God does not illumine the subject's view, then all he sees is his mistake – he does not see his sin. His efforts are empty rhetoric and his penance worthless. Only grace reveals sin. Only prayer is the vehicle of grace.⁹²

For Howard then, the examen is overwhelmingly an exercise of prayer.

6.2 The Examen as a Special Type of Prayer

Ignatius has offered many methods of prayer, suited to people at different stages of spiritual life. Howard thinks that the examen as a prayer primarily has to do with choices; it is a special type of prayer as a ‘concentrated instance of a spirit that penetrates the whole of apostolic life.’⁹³ The examen in itself acts as a prayer, a peculiarly personal moment of union with God seeking for light. The pattern of reflection that was characteristic of the life of Ignatius affirms this point: he posed to think about what he was about to do, or what he had accomplished; each meditation preceded an act of recalling the presence of God and reviewing the prayer once it was complete. Terming the reflection as a leitmotiv that runs through the exercises of the first week, Howard points out that reflection was always an

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 27.

⁹² Ibid., p. 28.

⁹³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 29.

integral part of entire life of Ignatius, be it in training other Jesuits, in manifestation of conscience, in governance, and so on.⁹⁴ And

the general examen is a prayer and the type of prayer that seeks to uncover a habitual fault or to focus on a habitual need. The particular examen is not a prayer but rather a methodology; it grows out of the discovery of a habitual fault or need and attaches itself to it. Unless the particular examen has this relationship to something habitual, it will lose its contact with reality and become an empty ritual, with no clear object to give it character and application.⁹⁵

Thus, the attitude of reflection was fundamental to Ignatius and an attitude of reflection permeated each waking hour of Ignatius – from the moment he got out of the bed to the time he got back to ‘sleep over it’ – and such reflection was far from a totalling of faults and virtues.

Howard relies on Delchard to prove his point, where he says “the examen is not a means of turning us into little Stoics, narrowly occupied with giving a particular cast to our personality; the examen is a constant return to the central question of our existence: is God more and more the master of our lives?”⁹⁶ Since God comes to humans in the mediation of space and time, human talents, health, place and people around them become important - all of these become ‘the threads whose arrangements and interlacing will form the fabric of the Kingdom.’ He points out that

in making the examination of conscience we seek not so much our faults, our virtues, ourselves, as those passing occasions when Christ came near to us and we did not even notice Him, or perhaps noticed Him but remained indifferent, or perhaps went beyond indifference to offense. To make the examination of conscience is to search for Christ making contact with our lives and then to ask ourselves, ‘Is God more and more the master of my life’ [...]. Thus, the examen is a reflection upon the choices we have made when Christ came near us. That is the type of prayer it is.⁹⁷

In this way the examen is a special type of reflective prayer.

⁹⁴ Howard lists various examples of how Ignatius dealt with different problems in Roman houses, instances in his own spiritual diary, instructions to superiors who were to govern the communities, manifestation of conscience and mutual manifestation of defects, instruction to the fathers at Trent, and so on. For more on this see *ibid.*, pp. 29-31.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

6.3 The Examen in Relation to Vocation

According to Howard, the purpose of the examen is disposition of soul through purity of heart and this purity consists in having nothing which is opposed to God and the operation of His grace, even to a small degree.⁹⁸ Purity then is “paring away venial sins, checking if not removing the disordered tendencies of our personalities, becoming more and more attentive to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. Purity of heart is, therefore, a state of sensitivity to God’s grace.”⁹⁹ Ignatius considered the examination of conscience not only as the best means to attain purity, but more as a daily exercise in the discernment of spirits by watching over one’s interior self. Precisely because such observation helps people to gain knowledge, such reflection is essential in apostolic life where there is greater temptation to build oneself rather than God.

Taking cue from Lallemand, Howard considers the examen as the best means to purify the heart as well as indispensable in all stages of spiritual life, and yet he argues that Ignatius never treated this as the highest or the final form of prayer: “this discernment is the preparation and prelude for the distinctive element in Ignatian spirituality, finding God in all things.”¹⁰⁰ In the life of Ignatius as well as from what he suggested to others, the examen is the reflective part of the day that is played out in the two moments of one’s vocation, namely prayer and activity. And then “a discernment of spirits is exercised with regard to both of them: has God been there in our prayer and work, or is it ourselves we were seeking? The examen aims at putting us back on the track which leads to seeing God in all things, by giving us a sensitivity to His presence both in prayer and in activity.”¹⁰¹

Therefore, this for Howard, is a kind of daily retreat – one considers one’s own sinfulness, passes through choices and election that is already made, to reach the contemplation to obtain divine love. Howard firmly believes “it is in the context of the examen, as we have tried to define it, that all our daily decisions are to be taken. In the final

⁹⁸ Here Howard is quoting Lallemand’s third principle from chapter 1 article 1.

⁹⁹ Howard, “Examination of Conscience,” p. 34.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

analysis, the examen is only one way of putting under a new light that spirituality which joins together prayer and activity.”¹⁰²

6.4 Observations

Howard talks of the examen as a prayer, as a special prayer when in relation to the process of discernment, and an exercise that has to be considered taking into account one’s identity. He connects the examen prayer as a moment of reflection of one’s action and discovering the pattern, and he does this drawing parallels with the life of Ignatius. He presents the examen as prayer that connects daily decisions, activities and spirituality, and in this sense, Howard talks in clear terms of the examen as a process of discernment and therefore we classify it as a spiritual examen.

7 Piet Penning de Vries and the Daily Examen

Piet Penning de Vries, while analysing the rules of discernment in the *Spiritual Exercises*,¹⁰³ refers to the examen as an important element in Ignatian Spirituality. Pointing out that the examen is not limited to the First Week of the Exercises, he argues that the review of prayer [77], verification of consolation [333-336] and evaluating the inclinations [342] are all instances of examining. According to Penning de Vries, the general examen is meant for more than mere observation of some particular defect. The Particular Examen is designed to address specific defects since the instruction is clear – to correct and to amend [*Sp. Ex.* 24-25], whereas the General Examen is to purify oneself, i.e. to see oneself with greater clarity.¹⁰⁴ Though this examen is lined to the confession, Penning de Vries believes that this is an introduction to discernment: “el examen general es un medio demasiado genérico para combatir una falta específica. Ignacio lo expone como una preparación remota para la confesión: precisamente porque teniendo como objeto propio las

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁰³ Piet Penning de Vries, *Ignatius of de Spiritualiteit de Jezüieten*, Lannoo, Tielt – La Haya – Holland, 1964. We use the Spanish translation of it, Piet Penning de Vries, *Discernimiento: dinamica existencial de la doctrina y del espíritu de san Ignacio de Loyola* (trans. Horacio Bojorge – Ignacio Iparraguirre), Bilbao: El Mensajero del Corazón de Jesús, 1967.

¹⁰⁴ See Penning de Vries, *Discernimiento*, p. 81.

inspiraciones de los diversos espíritus, es una introducción al discernimiento de los mismos.”¹⁰⁵

Penning de Vries, therefore, sees the examen as an exercise of discernment: “el examen general de conciencia se encamina a discernir los espíritus que nos han movido durante el día.” For Penning de Vries, then, the daily examen is a process of discernment and election:

el cuarto de hora del examen de conciencia puede convertirse gradualmente en un tiempo dedicado al discernimiento, durante el cual aplicamos el oído a nuestro corazón para auscultar la acción del buen espíritu y captar sus buenas mociones. A medida que nuestra experiencia de consolaciones y desolaciones y nuestra discreción se hacen más sutiles y dignas de confianza, el examen de conciencia se convierte en una elección ininterrumpida que puede participar también cada vez más de la espontaneidad del segundo tiempo de elección con la ‘asaz claridad y conocimiento’ que lo son propios [176].¹⁰⁶

Penning de Vries opines that the examen also helps verify if a person’s relation with God is becoming more spontaneous, which allows greater clarity in choosing.¹⁰⁷ Thus, he leaves no doubt that the examen is an exercise to choose God every day, and, for Penning de Vries the examen is a spiritual practice.

8 George Aschenbrenner and the Consciousness Examen

George A. Aschenbrenner¹⁰⁸ and the Ignatian Examen are well known in Ignatian Spirituality, and the 1972 article of George Aschenbrenner¹⁰⁹ is a watershed with regard to the Ignatian examen. Aschenbrenner was very clear in his approach to the examen, as the

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 80-81.

¹⁰⁷ “Porque los consuelos-ficticios exigen ahora mayor vigilancia y examen. [...] este autocontrol que consiste en examinar continuamente si nuestro trato con Dios va siendo cada vez más personal e inmediato, nos permitirá a la larga tratar cada vez más espontánea y directamente con Dios, con una naturalidad creciente, [...]” Ibid., p. 80.

¹⁰⁸ George A. Aschenbrenner was the Master of novices in Maryland province for ten years and later the director of the Jesuit Center for Spiritual Growth in Wernersville, Pennsylvania. His work with guided retreats as well as authoring books marks him out. He has served as spiritual director for lay faculty and facilitator of reflection on Ignatian charism at the University of Scranton, USA, and as formator at the North American College, Rome. He is the co-founder of the Institute for Priestly Formation at Creighton University, Nebraska, USA.

¹⁰⁹ See George A. Aschenbrenner, “Consciousness Examen,” in *RfR* 31 (1972) pp. 14-21.

very introductory statement points: “examen must be seen in relationship to discernment of spirits. It is a daily intensive exercise of discernment in a person’s life.”¹¹⁰ Making a clear distinction between conscience and consciousness, Aschenbrenner argues that the examen that Ignatius practiced and had in mind was examen of consciousness rather than of conscience.

For Aschenbrenner, an examen of conscience has a narrow moralistic outlook where the focus would be on the good or bad actions of each day, whereas consciousness examen draws on the principle of discernment. For, he argues,

in discernment the prime concern is not with the morality of good or bad actions; rather the concern is how the Lord is affecting and moving us (often quite spontaneously!) deep in our own affective consciousness. What is happening in our consciousness is prior to and more important than our actions which can be delineated as juridically good or evil. How we are experiencing the “drawing” of the Father (Jn. 6:44) in our own existential consciousness and how our sinful nature is quietly tempting us and luring us away from our Father in subtle dispositions of our consciousness – this is what the daily examen is concerned with prior to a concern for our response in our *actions*.¹¹¹

Aschenbrenner notes that such an examen would be a cooperation with the Spirit, “an experience in faith of growing sensitivity to the unique, intimately special ways that the Lord’s Spirit has of approaching and calling us.” He points out that such an examen, among other things, would be connected to growth and identity: “examen is a daily renewal and growth in our religious identity – this unique flesh-spirit person being loved by God and called by Him deep in his personal affective world. It is not possible for me to make an examen without confronting my own identity in Christ before the Father – my own religious identity as poor, celibate, and obedient in imitation of Christ as experienced in the charism of my religious vocation.”¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 15.

8.1 Examen and Prayer

According to the mind of Aschenbrenner, the examen is not an empty self-reflection nor a self-centred introspection, rather it is a time of prayer. It is a prayer that keeps us away from being ‘superficial and insensitive to the subtle and profound ways of the Lord deep in our hearts,’ especially when it is related to a continuing contemplative prayer. Without prayer the examen would become empty self-reflection for self-perfection, whereas in relation to prayer and daily prayerfulness it becomes possible to hear the invitation of God who calls for ordering one’s life.

For Aschenbrenner the examen without regular contemplation is futile because it is in such a context of prayer that the contemplator experiences subtle and even non-verbal ways the revelation of God. He considers that a failure at regular contemplation weakens responsible ordering of life which the contemplator is continually invited to by the Lord. On the other hand, insists Aschenbrenner, contemplation without regular examen becomes compartmentalized and superficial; the time of formal prayer may be very sacrosanct period in a person’s day, but when isolated from the rest of life he/she is not prayerful at the level where he/she really lives. Such a person is not finding God in all things precisely because the examen gives a daily contemplative experience of God, “a real bite into all our daily living.”¹¹³ For Aschenbrenner the examen is an important means to find God not just in the time of formal prayer but in everything. Thus, the examen is connected to prayer and the ways of living it out.

Aschenbrenner insists that the goal of the examen is not self-perfection but plays a role in the integration of the process of personal discernment. “The specific exercise of examen is ultimately aimed at developing a heart with a discerning vision to be active not only for one or two quarter-hour periods in a day but continually. This is a gift from the Lord [...] we must constantly pray for this gift, but we must also be receptive to its development within our hearts. A daily practice of examen is essential to this

¹¹³ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

development”¹¹⁴ Aschenbrenner cites the example of Ignatius saying, “the mature Ignatius near the end of his life was always examining every movement and inclination of his heart which means he was discerning the congruence of everything with his true Christ-centered self. This was the overflow of those regular intensive prayer-exercises of examen every day.”¹¹⁵ Though such prayer is a gift from God and one needs to pray for it, Aschenbrenner believes that having a continually discerning heart and an adaptation of this practice to each one’s stage of growth bring the best fruit out of this five-steps prayer.¹¹⁶

8.2 The Five Steps

Among the five steps, Aschenbrenner presents the prayer for enlightenment as the first step and differing from many others.¹¹⁷ Emphasising the importance of grace for gaining insights, he says:

the examen is not simply a matter of a person’s natural power of memory and analysis going back over a part of the day. It is a matter of Spirit-guided insight into my life and courageously responsive sensitivity to God’s call in my heart. What we are seeking here is that gradually growing appreciative insight into the mystery which I am. Without the Father’s revealing grace this kind of insight is not possible. [...] we begin the examen with an explicit petition for that enlightenment which will occur in and through our own powers but which our own natural powers could never be capable of all by themselves. That the Spirit may help me to see myself a bit more as He sees me Himself!¹¹⁸

Aschenbrenner is firm on the role of grace in this daily prayer and insists that the examen is a Spirit-guided exercise.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

¹¹⁶ With regard to gradual adaptation Aschenbrenner says, “the novice or “old-timer” must be aware both of the point of the one or two quarter-hour exercises of examen each day, namely, a continually discerning heart, and of the necessary gradual adaptation of his practice of examen to his stage of development and the situation in the world in which he finds himself. And yet we are all aware of the subtle rationalization of giving up formal examen each day because we have “arrived at” that continually discerning heart. This kind of rationalization will prevent further growth in faith sensitivity to the Spirit and His ways in our daily lives.” Ibid., pp. 16-17.

¹¹⁷ While maintaining that the first two parts could easily be interchanged he proposes this prayer as a fitting introduction the whole exercises. See *ibid.*, p. 17.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Reflective thanksgiving takes the second place in this prayer where gratitude for all the gifts received is a crucial element. Here the heart rests in ‘genuine faith-filled gratitude to our Father for His gifts in this most recent part of the day’ with a hope that life itself becomes humble, joyful thanksgiving. Aschenbrenner observes that in life there are many things taken for granted and against such background, such an attitude of reflection assumes greater importance.

Perhaps in the spontaneity of the happening we were not aware of the gift and now in this exercise of reflective prayer we see the events in a very different perspective. Our sudden gratitude – now the act of a humble selfless pauper – helps make us ready to discover the gift more clearly in a future sudden spontaneity. Our gratitude should center on the concrete, uniquely personal gifts that each of us was blessed with, whether large and obviously important or tiny and apparently insignificant.¹¹⁹

Through such reflective thanksgiving God would lead us to a deep realization that all is gift and no longer to be taken for granted.

Aschenbrenner terms the third step as ‘practical survey of action,’ and he is clear that in this step the focus is not on a catalogue of good and bad acts. But rather

our prime concern here in faith is what has been happening to and in us since the last examen. [...] what has been happening in us, how has the Lord been working in us, what has He been asking us. And only secondarily are our own actions to be considered. This part of the examen presumes that we have become sensitive to our interior feelings, moods, and slightest urgings and that we are not frightened by them but have learned to take them very seriously. It is here in the depths of our affectivity, so spontaneous, strong, and shadowy at times, that God moves us and deals with us most intimately. These interior moods, feelings, urges, and movements are the “spirits” that must be sifted out, discerned, so we can recognize the Lord’s call to us at this intimate core of our being. [...] the examen is a chief means to this discerning of our interior consciousness.¹²⁰

Here Aschenbrenner terms the approach to life first as listening and then acting in response, i.e., the fundamental attitude of a believer should be of listening and then responding. This way there is a need for what he terms “interior quiet, peace, and a passionate receptivity

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 18.

that attunes us to listening to God's word at every instant and in every situation and *then* responding in our own activity."¹²¹

In this third step, Aschenbrenner would insist that the concern should be with specific details and incidents that reveal patterns.

Our first concern here is with these subtle intimate, affective ways in which the Lord has been dealing with us during these past few hours. Perhaps we did not recognize Him calling in that past moment, but now our vision is clear and direct. Secondly our concern is with our actions insofar as they were *responses* to His calling. So often our activity becomes primary to us and all sense of response in our activity is lost. We become self-moved and motivated rather than moved and motivated by the Spirit (Rom 8:14). This is a subtle lack of faith and failure to live as a son or daughter of our Father.¹²²

Pointing out that it is the quality – the responsive-ness – of the activity more than the activity itself which should be the concern in the examen, Aschenbrenner reminds that there is no need to reproduce every instant of the day, but only those which bring some clarity and insight. And this is to be done in tandem with the particular examen.¹²³ According to him, the very personal and honest particular examen – an examen that calls for deeper conversion based on the personal experience of the love of God – illumines areas and aspects that need change.¹²⁴ Aschenbrenner considers such exercise of 'growing faith sense of sinfulness' as central and a spiritual faith reality that is opposed to a heavily moralistic and guilt-laden reality.¹²⁵

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ The author here clarifies what he understands by Ignatius' insistence on the particular examen: "It has often become an effort to divide and conquer by moving down the list of vices or up the list of virtues in a mechanically planned approach to self-perfection. A certain amount of time was spent on each vice or virtue one by one, and then we moved on to the next one on the list. Rather than a practical programmed approach to perfection, the particular examen is meant to be a reverently honest, personal meeting with the Lord in our own hearts." Ibid.

¹²⁴ Aschenbrenner points out that usually there is one area that needs greater attention: "we are deficient in so many areas and so many defects must be done away with. But the Lord does not want all of them to be handled at once. Usually there is one area of our hearts where He is especially calling for conversion which is always the beginning of new life. He is interiorly nudging us in one area and reminding us that if we are really serious about Him this one aspect of ourselves must be changed. This is often precisely the one area we want to forget and (maybe!) work on later."

¹²⁵ He considers a sense of sinfulness as an important element of the examen when he says "a deep sense of sinfulness depends on our growth in faith and is a dynamic realization which always ends in thanksgiving - the song of a 'saved sinner.' This can provide enormous insight into the relationship of these second and

The fourth step of the examen – contrition and sorrow – is not a shame nor a depression at one’s weakness but what he calls a faith experience: a growing realization of God’s desire for each one. Aschenbrenner opines that the sense of sorrow should flow from the practical survey of one’s actions, “this basic dimension of our heart’s vision which the Father desires to deepen in us as He converts us from sinners to His sons and daughters, if we allow Him, is here applied to the specifics of our actions since the last examen, especially insofar as they were selfishly inadequate responses to the Lord’s work in our hearts.”¹²⁶

Aschenbrenner points out that the fifth step grows naturally out of the previous elements of reflective thanksgiving, survey of actions as well as of sorrow for the inadequate response. Accordingly, the final step, the hopeful resolution for future, poses the following question: ‘in the light of our present discernment of the immediate past how do we look to the future? Are we discouraged or despondent or fearful of the future?’ And Aschenbrenner believes that “at this point in the examen there should be a great desire to face the future with renewed vision and sensitivity as we pray both to recognize even more the subtle ways in which the Lord will greet us and to hear His Word call us in the existential situation of the future and to respond to His call with more faith, humility, and courage.”¹²⁷ Thus, in the examen, the focus is not on one’s own powers for the future, but a trust in God whose spirit abides in human hearts.¹²⁸

Therefore, for Aschenbrenner, the examen focuses and renews one’s specific faith identity and importance in finding God in all things, at all times. The examen becomes a moment to look at interior consonance in order to detect their true direction and this is

third elements of the formal examen, especially as dimensions of our abiding Christian consciousness.”
Ibid., p. 19.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 20.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ “A great hope should be the atmosphere of our hearts at this point – a hope not founded on our own deserts, or our own powers for the future, but rather founded much more fully in our Father whose glorious victory in Jesus Christ we share through the life of Their Spirit in our hearts. The more we will trust God and allow Him to lead in our lives, the more we will experience true supernatural hope in God painfully in and through, but quite beyond, our own weak powers – an experience at times frightening and emptying but ultimately joyfully exhilarating.” Ibid.

intimately linked to finding God each and every time. Aschenbrenner describes how, for Ignatius the examen prayer was the central daily experience of prayer when he says,

being able to find God whenever he wanted, Ignatius was now able to find Him in all things through a test for congruence of any interior impulse, mood, or feeling with his true self. Whenever he found interior consonance within himself (which registers as peace, joy, contentment again) from the immediate interior movement and felt himself being his true congruent self, then he knew he had heard God's word to him at that instant. And he responded with that fullness of humble courage so typical of Ignatius. If he discovered interior dissonance, agitation, and disturbance "at the bottom of the heart" (to be carefully distinguished from repugnance "at the top of the head") and could not find his true congruent self in Christ, then he recognized the interior impulse as an "evil spirit" and he experienced God by "going against" the desolate impulse (cf. *Exercises*, # 319). In this way he was able to find God in all things by carefully discerning all his interior experiences ("spirits"). Thus discernment of spirits became a daily very practical living of the art of loving God with his whole heart, whole body, and whole strength. Every moment of life was loving (finding) God in the existential situation in a deep quiet, peace, and joy.¹²⁹

This almost instantaneous test for congruence with one's true self, from the discernment horizon, in the words of Aschenbrenner indeed becomes consciousness examen.

8.3 Observations

Other than interchanging the first two steps Aschenbrenner maintains the same steps as the *Spiritual Exercises* proposes but reorienting the focus of the steps themselves. The distinctive feature, undoubtedly, is defining 'consciousness' as the ambit of the examen and not just conscience. While the emphasis of the examen is on consciousness with its subtle dispositions and the depth of affective consciousness where the Lord moves, the major strength of this article is linking the examen prayer with a discerning vision of heart. By linking the contemplative prayer with this daily exercise of sifting the interior moods, feelings and movements of the spirits Aschenbrenner explores the relation between this short prayer and the Ignatian attitude of finding God in all things. It would be good to recall what we have said about conscience and consciousness in our first chapter and this distinction serves us to better appreciate what the author deals here. There is no doubt that

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

Aschenbrenner perceives the examen as a spiritual exercise where discernment has a major role.

9 John English: The Examen in Relation to Discernment

John English,¹³⁰ in a conference given to a group of religious, presented the examen as a tool to grow in awareness¹³¹ and he presented this exercise in relation to discernment. He termed discernment as an exercise done in the context of ‘what God wants of me’ – me as individual or in community, and he proposed that the daily examen becomes an effective tool.

9.1 Examen to Recognize the Movements

J. English reiterates that the basic purpose for spiritual discernment is to find God’s will, to know what the Lord wants of an individual and to be able to recognize it. It is in the context of what-God-wants-me that discernment is useful. J. English lays down the basic principles when he says that depending on the spiritual status of persons – either moving from bad to worse or from good to better – the movements of spirits vary and discernment is about recognizing such motions:

the purpose of this discernment of spirits is to find the Will of God [...] it is recognizing or becoming aware of how you are being moved at this time. What is happening to me now? Where is this movement coming from? Is it coming from the good spirit or is it coming from the evil spirit? [...] some basic questions are: Am I anxious? Am I in turmoil? Am I disturbed? Am I disquiet? Am I envious? Am I jealous? Am I tense, either

¹³⁰ John English (1924- 2004) is one of the pioneers of personal guided retreat specially in North America. In 1969 he began the centre named Institute of Practical Asceticism at Loyola House, Guelph and he is associated with spiritual renewal and guided retreats. He is the author of the well-known book *Spiritual Freedom* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1995).

¹³¹ John English gave a conference titled “Spiritual Discernment” to a group of nuns in London, Ontario on March 7th, 1973 where he talked in detail about the examen as a tool in discernment. After the Vatican Council II there was the talk of renewal and adaptation, and, as English notes, adaptation tended to take over ignoring renewal. Against such background renewal through discernment of spirits became the focal point and this conference was given in such background. The taped conference was later published from Guelph in 1985 in the form of a booklet under the title “*Discernment and the Examen*” and we maintain this title while citing the document.

physically or psychologically? This is the beginning of the knowledge of such movements.¹³²

In such a practice, there are three distinctive steps namely 1) what is meant by the signs of the good and evil spirits, 2) to know and recognize these in oneself, and 3) to use the discernment of spirits. English considers the second step, of recognizing the movements as the important aspect of discernment, and he says, “when we speak about discernment of spirits, we are speaking about recognizing these movements. We mean becoming aware of these movements in our being. Eventually, with this awareness, a person can use this knowledge to help him find out what God wants – to find the Will of God.”¹³³ he points out that such awareness also brings forth if the spirit of the world is present in him/her or spirit of Christ. In other words, the awareness of different spirits also reveals what motivates the person.¹³⁴

9.2 The Five Awareness Steps

J. English calls the five-point daily examen a method of self-awareness; it is a consciousness examen that seeks to grow through the steps of Gratitude Awareness, Grace for Light Awareness, Investigation Awareness, Sorrow or Joy Awareness and an On-Going Grace of Awareness.

9.2.1 Gratitude Awareness

By terming gratitude awareness as the first step of the examen, English says “it means to be aware of the one thing we receive every day from God, my life, my being, what I am. It is being aware that I am, [...]. There are all kinds of things to be grateful for.

¹³² English, “Discernment,” p. 10.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ English underlines the importance of freedom – freedom that comes through a cooperation with the spirit of Christ and not enslavement that is the result of the spirit of world. There are true principles and false principles operating in a person as 1 Jn. 4: 1-6 says. When English says, “the desire for recognition or for success, can be just as powerful a force for a person inside a cloistered convent or monastery, as it can be in the business world” he emphasises that discernment is concerned about what really motivates a person. Ibid., pp. 12-13. Spiritual freedom is an important theme that this author dealt with many times. See John J. English, *Spiritual Freedom*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 1995. The first edition of this book was published in 1973 and he says clearly that the book is about spiritual freedom. Chapter Three, pp. 33-42, deals with this theme.

Let being grateful become part of you. It is an awareness. It is not saying, “God I am grateful,” but it is an awareness of myself as being, as existing, that I am, and letting that be with me.”¹³⁵

According to J. English the gratitude awareness involves being grateful for the preservation from temptation, for having faith, hope charity, and so on; it also involves being grateful for one’s vocation, companions, and the experience of being loved by God. It can also involve an experience of being forgiven, experience of a need for God when one has failed and experience of being close to God in spite of sins. For J. English then, the first step of the examen involves a seeping of gratitude into one’s being, and he terms it, a movement across one’s being – movement of thanksgiving and gratitude.¹³⁶

9.2.2 Seeking Grace for Light

The second step of the examen is Grace for Light Awareness, seeking the light that comes from Jesus. J. English points out that we need this light every day because as we get closer to Christ there is also greater chance of being deluded, “we want this light. We want to be aware of the light. We are seeking grace to be aware of the message of Jesus for me. We pray to know the Lord. If we know Him, and His message, then the light is present to us. We want to have that awareness to seek from the Lord for it is a grace.”¹³⁷ There is need for light of Christ because Satan can tempt us, approaching under disguise;¹³⁸ the light that one seeks in this step is the true light of Jesus. “When you are asking for light and doing this exercise of awareness, you are seeking the source of the movements within you. These movements that take place in myself are fairly spontaneous. We don’t usually cause them intentionally. They happen. But they are very forceful; wither for good or for evil. I need

¹³⁵ English, “Discernment and the,” p. 16.

¹³⁶ “Start off by going through some of those good things that you have to be grateful for; the fact that you are, that you are a Christian, that you have been forgiven, that you have a vocation. By going through those reasons for being, grateful, what happens? There is an uplift of soul, there is a movement towards God who is good. It then becomes an awareness of His goodness. Let this awareness flood into you.” Ibid., p. 17.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 19.

¹³⁸ English here is using the words of St. Paul: “and no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness” 2 Cor. 11:14. Though he does not quote the rules of discernment it is clear that here he is using the principle of discernment.

to know what is, and who is the source of these spontaneous movements I am experiencing within myself.”¹³⁹

By praying for the grace of light one wants to know the source of different movements within¹⁴⁰ and it is possible through grace. The awareness of the movements within and the source of them reveal the presence of consolation or desolation and this in turn indicates interior patience, interior kindness or interior love. Such knowledge and awareness of movements, coupled with one’s historical background, helps one not to be scrupulous but to have greater self-acceptance. J. English argues that this awareness of the movements in turn leads one to identify the major causes of desolation that he/she may be experiencing.¹⁴¹ The movements themselves are not sinful and if examined well they could become occasion to grow in self-knowledge. Praying for such grace of awareness presupposes an attitude of faith in God who gifts the grace for me.¹⁴² J. English underlines the importance of observation and knowledge that comes from it when he says, “self-awareness is not to make a person scrupulous, but rather to make him aware of God’s love. It is to make a person aware of where he has sinned and where he has responded to love.”¹⁴³

9.2.3 Investigation Awareness

J. English calls the third step of the examen investigation awareness because the concern is not to have a catalogue of good and bad acts of the day; it is not to find out how many sins and faults one has committed. By terming it as investigation he wants to mark the difference between sacrament of confession, as he says,

the third part of this exercise in Awareness, I have called Investigation. In the examination of conscience, we tend to do it, like the preparation for confession. “How many sins and faults I have committed since the last confession or since yesterday? How many disordered thoughts and actions have I committed since yesterday?” this can be a part of

¹³⁹ English, “Discernment and the Examen,” p. 20.

¹⁴⁰ English talks of three sources among many possibilities: biological, psychological and spiritual source. Important thing is to be aware of the source that causes movement. See *ibid.*, pp. 20-22.

¹⁴¹ English reminds that just as the rules of discernment point out, other than tepidity or negligence, the reasons could involve testing by God or an occasion to give true knowledge of oneself. It is through the examen that one comes to such knowledge. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 26-28.

¹⁴² The author points out that the examen is not based on Pelagianism or perfectionism, rather on grace of God that is free, it is a gift; it is God who gives the capacity to love, we cannot earn it. See *ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

the examination of conscience, but it is only part of it. It shouldn't take too long. What I am suggesting to you is another exercise. Don't just look to see if you got angry this morning, (which in itself is not necessarily a sin), but rather see what caused the anger? Where did it come from?¹⁴⁴

The focus here is to find out what has caused the faults; one investigates in order to become conscious of the movements that are going across one's being so as to discover their true source. Because, points out J. English, "through this kind of investigation, say once a day for a few minutes, a person becomes aware of themselves, aware of the rest of the community and aware of God. In this awareness he is starting to become conscious of when God is operating in these movements and when the evil spirit is operating, or when it is just biological, or just psychological."¹⁴⁵

While maintaining the importance of awareness, J. English points out that it is not enough merely to be aware of one's faults or shortcomings, but through the investigation awareness, one comes to a realization that our God is a God of love and this in turn will help him/her check perfectionism and promotes acceptance.¹⁴⁶

9.2.4 Sorrow or Joy Awareness

J. English terms sin as the refusal of love rather than the refusal to love; sin is the rejection of love given rather than refusal to love: "I don't let God's love come to me, I push it away."¹⁴⁷ and at the fourth step, he points out that one is either filled with sorrow or joy; sorrow for not fully cooperating with the graces that God gave. In such an awareness, there can be sensible consolation or deep sense of sorrow for committing sins, and J. English terms such awareness as its own reward. He reminds that there are also experiences of joy as well as experiences of graces that are considered in this step of the examen,¹⁴⁸ and

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 38. See also p. 28 where he makes a distinction between such different movements.

¹⁴⁶ "The great dimension our faith is that God loves me, and He loves me just for myself, not for anything I have done [...]. He loves me. That is a hard truth to get through to our being. Thus any anxiety that is operating in my being has to be looked at very carefully. Is this from God, or is this from the devil? In most instances anxiety and fear come from the devil. There are a few times when this comes from God, because I am sinning, and a kind of fear moves in me." Ibid., p. 38.

¹⁴⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 43.

¹⁴⁸ "One of the experiences of joy is that I am forgiven, that I am accepted. The experience of humility is a great experience of joy. It is an awareness that of myself I am nothing. I experience this. It is with me.

one thanks God for it. At this stage, one is to make an act of sorrow or an act of gratitude depending on the status.

9.2.5 Seeking the On-Going Grace

For J. English this final step begins with the knowledge that one can really do nothing without God's grace, and in this manner the last step differs from the classical examen where resolutions usually take the centre stage. He reminds that there is always the desire to do better, but this step is "expressed as seeking the grace to recognize the presence of God in my life or to recognize the urgings of the good and evil spirits. Starting now to be aware." J. English points out that here the grace is also about learning from one's past experiences, that is, drawing from the past to better prepare for the future, so that gradually there is greater awareness.

9.3 Observations

John English places the examen in the context of the inner movements and what those movements mean to a person. He insists that the consciousness examen is a tool in awareness – awareness of the movements of spirits and their sources. By growing in awareness of God's grace and the different ways in which spirits act one grows in spiritual freedom. For him, being interiorly free is one of the important elements in seeking the will of God. J. English considers such awareness of movements crucial because they help in discerning what the Lord wants of people. Thus, for J. English, the examen is indeed an exercise in awareness and discernment.

There are other experiences of grace as well. Sometimes, I experience myself as having been kind this morning. I was patient today. I went out to help another person with whom I normally have great difficulty." Ibid.

10 Miguel Ángel Fiorito: Conscience and its Examination

Miguel Ángel Fiorito¹⁴⁹ highlights the central role of the examen in Ignatian spirituality by calling attention to the Biblical understanding of conscience as well as that of St. Augustine. Fiorito reflects what is conscience according to Ignatius and why he insisted much on this practice and he does this in the light of the Vatican Council II and GC 32. This article of 1979¹⁵⁰ is important in our analysis as it lays a special emphasis on conscience. Fiorito points out that the amount of space Ignatius allocates for the examen in the *Exercises* itself argues in favour of its great importance. We analyse here this article in order to capture his ideas on the Ignatian examen.

10.1 Conscience

Fiorito states that Ignatius never considered the conscience as a moral principle that would judge the right or wrongness of actions; nor would the examen be a sheer scientific introspection:

la conciencia, para Ignacio, no es solamente la “conciencia moral:” si así fuera, le bastaría referirse al “pensamiento ... propio mío,” del que depende la moralidad – buena o mala – de nuestros actos (nosotros no somos responsables de lo que ‘... viene de fuera’). No es tampoco la introspección natural, solipsística, científica, etc. etc., que “cosifica” la conciencia, reduciéndola a ser puro “objeto” de observación personal.¹⁵¹

Instead, conscience for Ignatius is a battlefield of distinctive spirits where not only one’s own volition but the good and bad spirits exert influence [*Sp. Ex.* 32], and “son los “dos caminos” que tiene delante la libertad humana – “mi libertad y querer,” como dice S. Ignacio (*EE.* 32). Uno de esos caminos es el que muestra el “buen espíritu,” y el otro, el malo.” Y la conciencia se halla ante la bifurcación de ambos caminos.”¹⁵² Fiorito is quick

¹⁴⁹ Miguel Ángel Fiorito was born in 1916 and joined the Jesuit novitiate in 1939. He was a professor of Philosophy at Colegio Máximo de san José, Argentina (1954-1969) before taking over the reins of Spirituality centre (1973-1995). His better-known work is a book on Ignatian spirituality, *Buscar y hallar la voluntad de Dios*, Buenos Aires: Paulinas, 2000.

¹⁵⁰ Miguel Ángel Fiorito, “La conciencia y su examen según san Ignacio,” in *Boletín de Espiritualidad* 61 (1979) pp. 1-40.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

to point out that moral principles also talk of two ways, one of what is prescribed and the other of what is prohibited; and that Ignatius has this in mind he said ‘that which pertains to our free choice and there is no prohibition’ [23]. And this, Fiorito would argue, clearly takes the conscience beyond the moral to spiritual realm, and so the object of the examen is spiritual conscience.

Further, conscience is what the scripture calls ‘heart’ where it refers to the innermost core of a person. Heart is the centre and the root of the depth of a person: “corazón, como término ‘primario’ que expresa la totalidad del ser humano, significa el centro y la raíz profunda de la persona, de donde brota todo lo demás que le pertenece – y a donde llega todo lo que afecta personalmente – el centro, por tanto, desde el cual el hombre se relaciona primaria y totalmente con Dios y con las otras personas.”¹⁵³ Thus, Fiorito points out that heart in the scriptures means the same as conscience in Ignatian terminology:¹⁵⁴ “según este lenguaje, pues, corazón significa lo mismo que conciencia en el lenguaje ignaciano: pero corazón indica más la interioridad, la profundidad de la conciencia; y conciencia más el pasado de la propia historia, que se hace presente en el momento del examen, y se proyecta – a través de los propósitos, [...] hacia el futuro.”¹⁵⁵ Pointing out that the Pauline use of the term spirit indicates the person at the depth of his interiority, his totality and at the same time the indwelling of God’s spirit, Fiorito argues that the examination of conscience invariably should be of our spirit as well as the action of the spirit of God within each individual.¹⁵⁶

In his analysis of the term conscience Fiorito calls attention to what St. Augustine had talked about it, and he points out that in St. Augustine’s language ‘memory’ was an important aspect that is used in confession of sins: recalling all the creatures of the earth, the sea, and so on to reach memory where all the treasures are stored; where all the senses

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁵⁴ We would like to recall here what we had already discussed in our first chapter, that theologians in the 20th century, in line with the Catechism of the Church, conceive this understanding of conscience.

¹⁵⁵ Fiorito, “La conciencia,” p. 5.

¹⁵⁶ The scriptures, especially the OT, talk of heart and less of conscience because this was the primary significance that was employed while ‘conscience’ comes from Greek philosophic-religious language. The Pauline use of ‘spirit’ comes from OT while ‘conscience’ is from Greek culture and therefore connected to *pneuma* or ‘*ruah*’. See *ibid.*, pp. 5-7.

and thoughts store what is received as well as where God dwells. It is in to the same memory, points out Fiorito, that Augustine looked for all the sorrow of evil, the sins and the wounds that are hidden,¹⁵⁷ where he noticed the need to confess. In Augustine's language then memory is the centre of all that takes place, and therefore, observes Fiorito, it is the same as 'heart' in the scripture, 'spirit' in St. Paul and 'conscience' in Ignatius.

10.2 The Practice of Examining One's Conscience

Right at the outset Fiorito recalls that Ignatius never prescribed the examen to start with a consideration of one's sins but with thanking God, and for Fiorito this is a clear sign of the whole vision for the examen. For Ignatius sin is not mere breaking of law, but more in 'considering the foulness and malice of each deadly sin committed, quite apart from being forbidden' [*Sp. Ex.* 57]. Fiorito shows that the examen is closely connected with the scripture, i.e., the order proposed by Ignatius – thanking God, asking for an account of soul of all the sins – is very biblical¹⁵⁸ as well as it is the underlying principle of renewal of covenant, particularly as seen in psalms.¹⁵⁹

Fiorito insists on gratitude being the first step because in the scripture, in the psalms of renewal of covenants as well as in the *Exercises*, the consideration of benefits received from God precedes that of sins committed, and for him this justifies the placement of gratitude as the first step in the examen.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, a clear knowledge of all the good received from God's goodness opens the eyes of people to their own sinfulness, just as in

¹⁵⁷ Fiorito says "y a partir de aquí (cap. 28ss.), busca, en la misma memoria, "las tristezas de mis males – dice – ..." es decir sus pecados: "He aquí – dice – que no oculto mis llagas. Tú eres médico, y yo estoy enfermo. Tú eres misericordioso, y yo miserable... ¿Acaso no es tentación sin interrupción la vida del hombre sobre la tierra? Toda mi esperanza no estriba sino en tu muy grande misericordia..." Y comienza la confesión de sus pecados." Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁵⁸ Fiorito argues that in the Bible, especially in the Prophets, Yahweh is the accuser as well as the judge; He calls for a judgement invoking witnesses and accuses Israel but recalling all the blessings that were showered on them, etc. Cf. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

¹⁵⁹ Especially Psalm 95 where first there is acknowledgment of the blessings received in creation and election, the accusation of Yahweh, etc. See *ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 13. "tanto en la Sagrada Escritura – en el esquema profético del *rib* o proceso y en los salmos de la renovación de la Alianza – como en los Ejercicios Espirituales de S. Ignacio – en el orden de todos los Ejercicios, que comienzan con el *Principio y Fundamento*, y en el de los "ejercicios" de la *Primera semana* – la consideración de los beneficios recibidos de Dios antecede la de los pecados cometidos contra ese mismo Dios tan bueno."

the parable of Zacchaeus.¹⁶¹ For Ignatius, ingratitude to a God who has done so much is the gravest of sins and then there is no surprise that gratitude be the first step.¹⁶² Since gratitude and recognition of all the good received have much to do with the Contemplation to Attain Love, thanking God should be done following the same sequence of this contemplation,¹⁶³ and Fiorito considers it as the perfect way to be thankful.¹⁶⁴

Analysing the sequence of the examen, Fiorito points out that everything begins in the presence of God and all the components of typical prayer in the *Exercises* like ‘God our Lord looking at me’ [*Sp. Ex. 75*] can also be employed in the examen. Fiorito says that here it is not important to look at God, but to consider God looking at me.¹⁶⁵ This experience of the gaze of God – a gaze that existed even before one was formed in the womb (Ps. 139) – creates a sense of belongingness, and this would become the launching pad for the examen. Such a gaze would also change the outlook of the examen, a penetrating look that is alive and active.¹⁶⁶

According to Fiorito, there are two graces that are asked, namely the grace to do the examen and to put the resolutions into practice. Pointing out that such petition is important in the Ignatian prayer, Fiorito says “y toda hora de oración tiene su petición peculiar, que

¹⁶¹ “Es el mensaje de la historia de la conversión de Zaqueo, jefe del publicano (Lc. 19, 1-10): El hecho de que Jesús quiera albergarse en su casa, en casa de este hombre despreciado y a quien todos evitaban, es para Zaqueo inconcebible ... Jesús le concede su comunión. Esta bondad de Jesús sobrecoge a Zaqueo... La bondad de Dios es el único poder que a un hombre puede conducirlo realmente a la conversión.” Ibid, p. 13.

¹⁶² Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 13-14. “Y porque la Bondad de Dios es, no solo en la Biblia sino también en S. Ignacio - tanto en el examen de conciencia como en la Primera semana - el motivo último y más fuerte de la conversión, el pecado más grave es el de la ingratitude a un Dios que ha hecho tanto por nosotros.”

¹⁶³ “[...] nos parece que debe ser completado, en manera de dar gracias, con lo que, al final de los mismos Ejercicios [...] Queremos decir que nos debíamos acostumbrar a dar gracias a Dios según el esquema que S. Ignacio nos presenta en esta contemplación de los Ejercicios.” Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁶⁴ He calls it perfect because it is complete; in thanksgiving, there is a movement from outside to inside, i.e. from the creation to God who labours in all things. This thanksgiving is also ‘in the Church’ because “cuando estamos dando gracias al Señor por los beneficios recibidos, debemos recordar que los hemos recibido “en la Iglesia;” y que también debemos dar gracias a Dios por los beneficios a la Iglesia, de la cual somos miembros.” Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 18-20.

¹⁶⁵ The author considers that John’s vision of the seven churches would be helpful in beginning the examen. See book of Revelation, especially chs. 1-2. See *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

¹⁶⁶ “Necesitamos, para hacer bien nuestro examen de conciencia, de una mirada del Señor penetrante como su Palabra: “... viva y eficaz ... (que) penetra hasta las juntas y la medula, hasta las fronteras entre el alma y el espíritu, y escruta los sentimientos y pensamientos del corazón. No hay para ella nada invisible...” Hb. 4, 12-13.” *Ibid.*, p. 17.

siempre hay que hacer, una vez terminado el “preámbulo” o “preámbulos” anteriores, y antes de entrar en la materia de la meditación o contemplación, que está siempre íntimamente relacionada con el contenido de la petición. Lo que “quiero y deseo...” en cada hora de oración, es lo que debo pedirle al Señor.”¹⁶⁷ This is because, the examen is first of all a prayer. And petition during the examen is important not because God is unaware of our requirements, rather because through such prayer one’s desire for this grace grows and one grows in the capacity to receive them.

The prayer of petition is focused on knowing one’s sins because it is God who can reveal them:

solo Dios puede revelarnos nuestro pecado; por tanto, a Él debemos pedir que nos lo revele [...]. La única esperanza que nos queda es que la gracia de Dios haga brillar un rayo de verdad a través de las murallas de nuestra conciencia [...]. El reconocimiento de la falta no es solo el primer momento del encuentro con Dios, sino su primer efecto: es menester que, desde primer momento, Dios nos revele la falta que nos aparta de Él.¹⁶⁸

This clearly shows that there is absolute necessity for God’s grace and that the examen is not a mere introspection, but rather an attentive listening to God. Through such a petition as the second step, the aim is not just to know the sins, but to arrive at their roots, “además, no se trata meramente de conocer los pecados cometidos, sino de llegar a la raíz de todos los pecados cometidos “capitales,” a la “debilidad” que somos (cf. 2 Co. 12, 9-10), al “todo impedimento” que somos.”¹⁶⁹

Fiorito insists that the heart of the examen consists in asking an account of the day. Fiorito warns that though it may sound like voluntarism, the focus of this exercise is clear: it is God who judges. Asking for an account of our conduct is always done under the gaze of God and after thanking Him for all the good received. The affirmation of Fiorito stands clear: ‘we ask for the grace precisely because it does not depend on our own capacity; rather it is God who reveals all things to us.’

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 23-24. He also cites the examples of Theresa of Avila and Theresa of Child Jesus to substantiate the need to depend on God and not on one’s own strength.

Asking pardon as the fourth step of the examen again reiterates that it is against gratitude that this aspect is measured: a grateful heart that sees ‘how much the Lord has done for me.’ Fiorito recommends that this step of the examen is more effective when one imagines ‘Christ crucified who died for my sins.’ He recommends that a sense of gratitude should mark the whole of the examen.¹⁷⁰ Asking pardon, points out Fiorito, is in a way receiving it already, and the great joy one experiences at receiving the grace facilitates the next step of the examen, namely the resolve to amend. This final step of the examen is a resolve to amend and it is done with the grace of God. Grace of God is necessary not only to propose amendments but also to undertake it later, and the joy of being forgiven is an integral part of the final step.¹⁷¹ The sentiments of joy is truly Christian and is a concurrent theme in the Bible: “entre todas estas alegrías ocupa un lugar especial la alegría de sentirse perdonado: en la medida que sintamos esta alegría del perdón, nos sentiremos más animados para la enmienda.”¹⁷² Finally, the examen is completed with an ‘Our Father,’ precisely because it is a prayer and every period of prayer is ended in such a way. Fiorito underlines the prayer character of this exercise when he says that the grace of God is necessary because there is always the danger of relying on one’s own capacity.¹⁷³

10.3 Observations

From our detailed analysis of this article on the Ignatian nature of the examen, we can point out the following features that the author emphasizes:

¹⁷⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

¹⁷¹ “Supone, [...] como respuesta a nuestra petición de perdón. Pero además requiere, tanto para proponer como para cumplir con nuestros propósitos, la gracia de Dios.” *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁷³ “Y si hacemos nuestros propósitos de enmienda confiados, no en nosotros mismos, sino en la gracia del Señor, podemos luego confiar en su ayuda para su cumplimiento.” *Ibid.*, p. 30. Fiorito also talks of the importance of keeping in mind one’s neighbour: “todo pecado o falta es, en último término, contra los demás: o porque es contra ellos directamente, o porque nuestras faltas o pecados contra Dios nuestro Señor, al debilitar nuestras relaciones con El, también debilitan nuestra capacidad de hacerles bien a los demás. En otros términos, Dios no sale perdiendo por nuestras faltas o pecados; pero nuestro prójimo sí.” *Ibid.*, p. 31.

- 1) It is a prayer: Fiorito insists that the examen is a prayer and not a mere self-corrective exercise. The general atmosphere as well as each step of the examen are to be done in the presence of God.
- 2) Conscience as centre of human life: conscience is the centre of one's life, just like in the scripture 'heart' is employed to refer to the deepest part of person.
- 3) Gratitude: examination of one's conscience is done against the background of gratitude, i.e. an evaluation of one's response to a 'God who has done so much for me.'
- 4) Primacy of grace: in the examen, grace of God is an important element and one's own effort is secondary. Asking for the grace at the beginning to see one's sins, grace to make resolutions as well as to fulfil them call attention to the centrality of grace.

From the above it is amply clear that Fiorito talks about an examen that is an exercise of spiritual discernment and as a prayer, the examen is a spiritual exercise.

11 Luis González and the Examen

Luis González was born on 2 October 1916 in Sevilla. Though he lost his parents at a young age – father died when González was three and mother when he had 8 years – they left a lasting impression especially leading to his entry in the Society.¹⁷⁴ His early studies at Colegio Ntra. Sra. del Recuerdo left a deep impression¹⁷⁵ on González, and during this period he visited Rome, in 1926 on the occasion of the third centenary of the canonization of St. Aloysius and St. Stanislas Koska. González entered the Society in 1932, in the province of Toledo. González was the first to enter the novitiate at Brussels, Belgium owing to the political turmoil in his native Spain. González returned to Madrid for his

¹⁷⁴ See "Luis González," in *Fuentes de Revuelta* which includes biographies and manuscripts of many Jesuits that is managed by Prof. Manuel Revuelta S.J. This will be referred to as *Fuentes de Revuelta* with corresponding page numbers under each entry.

¹⁷⁵ The devotion to Our Lady of Recuerdos, annual retreats, devotion to Eucharist, and so on. See "Luis González," p. 2.

philosophy studies and later he went to Granada to do the theology and was duly ordained a priest in 1948.¹⁷⁶ He made the tertianship at Salamanca, under the guidance of Encinas.¹⁷⁷

González had first ministry at Zorrilla, the only parish that was managed by Jesuits then in Madrid, and it was here he worked at summer camps for children, collaborating with P. Llanos. It was here that González began his preaching ministry, which was to continue in later years. From 1952-53 González was at Rome doing his doctoral studies and later he was made the vice-provincial in December 1954. From 1963 to 1969 he was the provincial of Toledo. More significantly, González was instrumental in the foundation of the centre for Ignatian Spirituality at the Jesuit Curia in Rome at the request of then General, Arrupe, apart from being a close collaborator of Arrupe.

11.1 The Examen in the *Exercises*

For Luis González, praying was synonymous with seeking and finding God's Will, for he says, "algunas veces se busca la voluntad divina como una verdad abstracta, como una adivinanza espiritual. Pero la voluntad divina en Dios simplicísimo es Dios mismo, como fuente del amor y del querer. Orar es buscar a Dios. Y hallarle."¹⁷⁸ Praying is also tasting and relishing things internally; it is to be in communion with God in love. To pray is to be governed by God, and it is to see things with the eyes of God.¹⁷⁹ And in this context, González talks of the spiritual value of the practice of the examen terming it as one of the easiest ways to pray: "es un modo fácil de orar: a) es decir, de ver las cosas con los ojos de Dios y quererlas como las quiere Dios. b) Es comentar diariamente con Dios los acontecimientos del día c) Es incalculable la transcendencia que puede tener en nuestra

¹⁷⁶ Before the ordination González made his retreat under José Calveras, who possibly influenced him. See *ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁷⁷ In his memoirs González recalls the month-long retreat under P. Encinas which he terms as "en los ejercicios era muy literal, por una parte y por otra parte abundante en el desarrollo del texto. Nos daba los apuntes cuando nos explicaba (y que daría origen al libro que luego publicó) algunos días después de haberlos comentado: prefería que tomásemos notas personales." *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ Luis González - Ignacio Iparraguirre, *Ejercicios Espirituales: comentario pastoral*, Madrid: BAC, 1965, p. 641.

¹⁷⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 642ff.

vida el haber visto dos veces al día los pecados, los acontecimientos, las personas, nuestra situación, con esta mirada pura.”¹⁸⁰

The examen is a means to create peace and spiritual joy by looking at the life events with a positive outlook as well as by receiving forgiveness. This is achieved by a confession that focuses on the transcendental aspect of sin, sin as an offense against God. When seen this way, González points out, there is sorrow for sins as a result of the examen and the subsequent rectification would lead to a reform of life. For González, this is nothing other than a change of heart. When such an examen corrects one’s faults, there is also progress in spiritual life: “porque corrige nuestras faltas y, al mismo tiempo, quita impedimentos para la libre acción de la gracia en el alma. Porque enseña a descubrir la acción del bueno y del mal espíritu. Porque fomenta la práctica de la caridad, entroncándola con el misterio de Dios oculto en las criaturas. Porque, lejos de amilanarnos con nuestras faltas, nos enseña a sacar partido de ellas.”¹⁸¹ The daily examen also prepares people to appreciate the sacrament of confession, not just a routine practice but one that focuses on social consciousness and holds the aspect of forgiveness in high esteem.

González insists that the examen does not increase restlessness of conscience, on the contrary, it brings peace: “debemos afirmar A) Que el examen debe rectificar nuestra conciencia, enseñándole a juzgar rectamente las cosas sin excesos de una u otra parte. B) Que, cualquiera que sea nuestra situación espiritual, debemos buscar y hallar la paz en el examen de conciencia, tratándolo todo con Dios.”¹⁸² He points out that the focus of the examen should be not solely on the defects but also on the good that one has done, in order to encourage it; and the examen should also focus on the good that one has failed to do. Thus, the examen helps one recognize one’s true defects as well as the virtues that are necessary.

González warns that though the examen is one of the most useful exercises, people can easily fall into the dangers of excessive self-reflection, aridity as intellectual exercise,

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 648-649.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p. 651.

¹⁸² Ibid.

or to consider it merely as an ascetic practice that relies only on one's own capacity. González believes that in order to avoid such pitfalls, the focus should always be on self-knowledge that aims at amendment of faults. The examen, therefore, should always be as an exercise where one is cooperating with God's grace, and then it would become an exercise of finding God in all things and sees all the reality with the eyes of God. In other words, this would be an exercise in familiarity with God.¹⁸³ The general examen helps one to purify the conscience as well as to associate one's life with God. For González, this exercise becomes an affective prayer.

For González, then, the examen is a way to pray daily, and this can be done easily through the four types of examen that the Exercise prescribes.¹⁸⁴ Here, he considers the particular examen not just as a way to correct one's own specific sins, but more as a means to find God even in one's failures.¹⁸⁵

11.2 Observations

Luis González treats the daily examen as a means to progress in spiritual life; for him it is an exercise that not only removes impediments but also opens the soul to the action of Spirit. By pointing out the pitfalls of an examen that rely too much on one's own capacity, González places the emphasis on the work of God. The examen is a prayer where one cooperates with the grace of God and not an ascetic practice that places oneself at the centre of all action. In this way, González relates the examen with finding God in all things and terming it as an exercise in familiarity with God he leans towards a spiritual examen.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 652-653.

¹⁸⁴ González names general examen, particular examen, review of prayer and the First Way of Praying. See *ibid.*, p. 653.

¹⁸⁵ "No es solo un medio de corregirse, sino un medio de encontrar familiarmente a Dios incluso en nuestras caídas."

¹⁸⁶ In an article written years later González develops this aspect more elaborately and affirming more emphatically that the examen is a spiritual exercise in discerning. Cf. Luis González, "Examen de conciencia y discernimiento," in *Manresa* 62 (1990) pp. 289-306.

12 Other Contemporary Interpretations

We have already mentioned that the last century has witnessed an unprecedented interest in the use of the examen and this is seen in the increased number of publications, specifically on the way to practice the examen. It is noteworthy that most of the authors talk of the examen as an exercise to find the presence of God and they do not offer any interpretations that are significantly different from their predecessors. Hence, we bring them together under the title ‘contemporary interpretation’ so as not to leave out any authors. It is also noteworthy that, of late there have been writers who treat this theme who are not Jesuits and this again points to the diffusion of the examen in the universal Church.

Donald St Louis considers the examen as a central element of Ignatian spirituality and he sees it as “a prayer of discernment, a vitally illuminating and dynamic experience of prayerful reflection that both celebrates and enhances one’s awareness of and response to the Lord who is ever-present and ever-active in our world of human experience.”¹⁸⁷ He points out the connection between this exercise and the Contemplation to Attain Love. For St Louis the Ignatian spirituality is one of finding God in all things because God can be found since he is present in all of reality.

David Keith Townsend, in an article titled “The Examen Re-Examined”¹⁸⁸ focuses on the practice of the examen prayer. Although he insists that the examen is a prayer and not an empty self-reflection, Townsend does not rule out the possibility of a deeper look at interior moods, urges, movements, and turmoil during the examen, without overloading this exercise.¹⁸⁹ Along the same line, he indicates that since the examen is related to sin, for he says, “to suggest that the examens have nothing to do with sin or defect is to resist

¹⁸⁷ Donald St Louis, “The Ignatian Examen: A Method of Theological Reflection,” in *The Way Supplement* 55 (1986) pp 66-76, here p. 67. The same article was later published under the title “Ignatian Examen” in Philip Sheldrake, *The Way of Ignatius Loyola* (ed.), St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991, pp. 154-164. We are using the earlier version.

¹⁸⁸ David Keith Townsend, “The Examen Re-Examined,” in *CIS* 55 (1987) pp. 11-64. A shorter version of it was published on an earlier date: “The Examen and the Exercises – A Re-Appraisal,” in *The Way Supplement* 52 (1985) pp. 53-63. Since the author develops more his ideas in the later version, we refer to the former one here.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. Townsend, “The Examen Re-Examined,” p. 14.

the manifest meaning of the text. Besides which, the very position of the examen material in the book of the *Spiritual Exercises* [...] underlines that the examens do have to do with sins and defect.”¹⁹⁰

Just as such examens provide raw material for the process of discernment,¹⁹¹ the examen in daily life is related to discernment: “the various forms of examination certainly provide the raw material for discernment, by giving a person access, after each half-day and each period of prayer, to the ways of God’s gracing in his life and to the manner of his response to those ways.”¹⁹² Then, argues Townsend, “the examens are not meant to be a rigidly imposed drill. They are flexible instruments, but they need to be used with some sensitivity and awareness.”¹⁹³ For him the examen is then part of a process where one is able to do more than just extricate between just sin and negligence but rather, able to observe the direction of the whole flow of any set of experiences at any given moment.¹⁹⁴ Thus, the examen is clearly related to discernment.

Joseph Tetlow is another author who has looked at the examen from new perspectives in the recent times. He points out that over the years there have been two approaches with regard to its practice, what he calls ‘self-regarding’ versus ‘self-emptying’ or sin-centred versus transcendence-focused, and he calls attention to two recent developments that have influenced the interpretations, namely, proliferous directed retreat, and developments in psychology.¹⁹⁵ He points out three Ignatian principles as the basis for interpretations and he observes: “this examen shares several important characteristics with all prayer in the Ignatian tradition, [...] since the examen deals directly with sin and sinfulness, the Ignatian examen implies a characteristic Ignatian understanding of sin that includes shame as well as guilt and focuses on sin as failure. [...] Ignatius connects sin with ingratitude in various ways [...]. Hence, the Ignatian examen shares with all Ignatian prayer an emphasis on the concrete existential gifts and graces of God.”¹⁹⁶ Tetlow places

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁹¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 37ff.

¹⁹⁵ Joseph A. Tetlow, “The Examen of Particulars,” in *RfR* 56 (1997) pp. 230-250, here p. 231.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 233-234.

importance on examining desires by asking ‘what God wants of me’ and he says “the whole intention in Ignatian prayer, including the examination of conscience, is to find what God is hoping for and wishes and wants at this time and this place. This is one way to explain the expression ‘contemplative in action.’”¹⁹⁷

St Louis, Townsend, Tetlow and the list of those who interpret the examen continues and what is common to these are the reliance on psychological principles as well as presenting the examen in the globality of Ignatian Spirituality. As we have seen above, many authors point out to a parallel to Contemplation to Attain Love and the examen, and they talk of the examen in relation to finding God in all things and being contemplative in action. Some other authors who talk of the daily examen in such a way are Carlos García Hirschfeld,¹⁹⁸ Carlos Domínguez,¹⁹⁹ and Peter G. van Breemen.²⁰⁰ Interestingly there have been publications by non-Jesuits like Timothy Gallagher²⁰¹ or Jim Manney²⁰² who talk of the effectiveness of the exercise in everyday prayer life. The interest in the examen continues to grow and the table below captures the major publications in the recent times.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 236.

¹⁹⁸ Carlos García Hirschfeld, “Todo modo de examinar la conciencia,” in *Manresa* 62 (1990) pp. 251-272.

¹⁹⁹ Carlos Domínguez, “El ‘mucho examinar,’ funciones y riesgos,” in *Manresa* 62 (1990) pp. 273-288.

²⁰⁰ Peter G. van Breemen, “The Examination of Conscience,” in *RfR* 49 (1990) pp. 600-609.

²⁰¹ Timothy M. Gallagher, *The Examen Prayer*, New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2006.

²⁰² Jim Manney, *The Prayer that Changes Everything*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 2011.

1.	1940	José Calveras	Book
2.	1945	James A. Kleist	<i>RfR</i>
3.	1956	Albert Görres	<i>Geist und Leben</i>
4.	1957	Antoine Delchard	<i>Christus</i>
5.	1959	Roy Howard	<i>Woodstock Letters</i>
6.	1960	Antoine Delchard	<i>DSp.</i>
7.	1963	Louis-Joseph Lebret	Book
8.	1965	Luis González	Book
9.	1972	George Aschenbrenner	<i>RfR</i>
10.	1973	John English	Booklet
11.	1979	Miguel A Fiorito	<i>Boletín de espiritualidad</i>
12.	1980	Alvaro Restrepo	<i>Reflexiones CIRE</i>
13.	1982	David K Townsend	<i>CIS</i>
14.	1982	Jean-Claude Dhôtel	<i>Christus</i>
15.	1985	Wenceslao Soto	<i>Manresa</i>
16.	1990	Peter G. van Breemen	<i>RfR</i>
17.	1990	Carlos García Hirschfeld	<i>Manresa</i>
18.	1990	Carlos Domínguez	<i>Manresa</i>
19.	1986	Donald St Louis	The Way Supplement
20.	1992	Pierre Gouet	<i>Cuaderno</i>
21.	1992	Adolfo Chércoles	<i>Manresa</i>
22.	1992	Francois Paroes	<i>Cuaderno</i>
23.	1994	Joseph A. Tetlow	<i>Studies</i>
24.	1994	Juan Manuel Martín-Moreno	<i>Sal Terrae</i>
25.	1996	Josep Baquer	Book
26.	1997	Joseph A. Tetlow	<i>RfR</i>
27.	1997	Sylvie Robert	<i>Christus</i>
28.	2002	Carlos R Cabarrús	<i>Diakonia</i>
29.	2005	Marko Ivan Rupnik	Book
30.	2006	Timothy Gallagher	Book
31.	2009	Pascual Cebollada	<i>Manresa</i>
32.	2010	Gary Jansen	Book
33.	2011	Jim Manney	Book
34.	2012	William M. Watson	Book
35.	2013	Mark Agent	<i>The Way</i>
36.	2013	Colleen M Lasky	Book
37.	2014	Somy Mannoor	Book
38.	2015	Mark E. Thibodeaux	Book
39.	2015	Jose M. Zumalabe	Book
40.	2016	Joan Roccasalvo	Book
41.	2016	Adelson Araujo Santos	Book

What is worth mentioning, even though not some newer interpretations, is also approaches by some authors who make use of the wisdom of the reflective examen in identifying paradigms for spiritual growth²⁰³ or in spiritual direction.²⁰⁴

13 Conclusion

The 20th century witnessed an array of articles on the importance of the examen and for the same reason we can term it as the golden era of the Ignatian examen. The first thing we notice is the widespread authorship: we have examples from European countries like Spain, France or Germany; there is one from Canada and another from USA; and then from Argentina; and the list continues. More than the number of continents this indicates the larger popularity of this simple exercise that can be done in a short period of time. In the same way, we can also highlight the fact that the authors come from multiple cultural backgrounds – be it psychologists, retreat preachers or renowned spiritual guides.

Another important characteristic of this era is undoubtedly the developments around the Vatican Council II: we see an abundance of writings around this period. We have seen that prior to this council there were a good number of articles that clearly indicated a shift in the approach to spiritual life and to the examen in particular. This twenty-year period (1955-1975) saw a clear change in the course of the Ignatian examen and this is indeed unprecedented. In and around the Vatican Council II, along with the winds of change in life in the Church, there took place a shift towards discerning type of examen.

It is important to note that Aschenbrenner's article was only a culmination of a process that had clearly started decades before – Görres, Delchard and Howard preceded him in pointing out that the examen is in fact an exercise of discernment. Calveras casually mentions the examen as related to discernment, Görres highlighted the spiritual wisdom of Ignatius in proposing the examen as a tool to observe movements in the soul; Delchard and

²⁰³ See William M. Watson, *Sacred Story: An Ignatian Examen for the Third Millennium*, Seattle: Sacred Story Institute, 2012. He terms the examen as a tool to travel to one's heart; the examen could be a tool for conversion at various levels. Watson presents it as a sacred story, with four paradigms.

²⁰⁴ See Iain Radvan, "Spiritual Direction, Experiential Focusing and the Examen of St. Ignatius," in *The Way* 57 (2018) pp. 101-110.

Howard are firm in their proposal that it is a daily exercise of decision making and discernment, Aschenbrenner called it an exercise that operates at the consciousness where subtle movements are looked at. John English termed it as awareness of God's work and Fiorito further highlighted how far the examen can be useful in observing the core of human person, his/her 'heart.' And there are many more who keep insisting on the discerning character of the daily examen. Yet it is an acknowledged fact that Aschenbrenner's Consciousness Examen left its mark forever. The majority of authors after this period agree that the examen is more than a preparation for confession and this exercise should be seen in the light of gratitude that Ignatius clearly proposes throughout the *Exercises*. It is lesser known fact that there is a pre-history to Aschenbrenner – that is to say, the contribution of Görres, Delchard and Howard have remained practically unknown.

From the wide variety of authors we have studied, we can also conclude that other than popularity, the examen also is employed in wider contexts, and this is clearly in tandem with the developments in moral and spiritual life of the Church. As we have seen in our introductory chapter, it was in the early part of the twentieth century that the term spirituality itself gained popularity and during the same period moral theology underwent radical changes. More than ever, the interpretations in 20th Century clearly show that the Ignatian examen is understood in the crossroads of morality and spirituality. The large number of articles around the Council also points to the whole process of evolution in tandem with the Aggiornamento the Council visualized. The renewal in theology in general, and moral theology and spiritual theology in particular, contributed to such a spiritual understanding of the practice of examen. It is also noteworthy that it was during the early 20th Century that the Ignatian mysticism was brought to the frontline of research; Ignatian writings were subjected to rigorous historical criticism and an Ignatian school of thought especially with mystical tone was rediscovered. These developments in dialogue with other phenomenon of holiness for all propelled the newer interpretations with regard to the examen practice. It would be an interesting area to look forward to. And we like to cull together what we have come across in our analysis and this we do in the following pages.

General Conclusion

In our study of the history of the Ignatian Examen we began our research with the assumption that the Examen can be understood in the confluence of Morality and Spirituality. In our first chapter, we explored the meaning of the term spirituality and saw that it is about a lived human experience; it is about the Divine-human encounter and the manner in which it is lived in everyday life. We have also seen that although Moral Theology has its origin in the bosom of confessionals and, hence intimately linked to the sacrament of confession, its scope goes beyond sin. The distinction between mortal sin and venial sin marked a sort of beginning of moral principles and such a demarcation played a significant role in the way the Sacrament of Confession was developed. Morality, confession and spirituality are interrelated and yet spirituality was considered distant from these. We have also observed in our First Chapter that when Ignatius knelt at the confessional in Montserrat and other places, he was introduced not only to the moral principles but to the spiritual foundations of choosing God and rejecting evil.

Closely associated to these was the whole understanding of conscience and we have analysed the nuances of this term for Ignatius as well as for subsequent generations. From

his initial confessional and other religious practices, Ignatius perceived conscience as the final judge not only of behaviour but of interiority, an understanding that would radically change after his profound personal encounter with the mystery of God. When Ignatius proposed the exercises to examine one's conscience, he based himself on the morality that he imbibed as well as that he experienced mystically. In this way, our First Chapter set the tone for studying what Ignatius proposed in the *Spiritual Exercises*, i.e. the examen as an exercise in morality as well as in spirituality.

In our study of the writings of Ignatius, we focused especially on the ones that were not considered in earlier studies and we saw the many letters that talk of the Examen as a preparation for confession, which we called a moral exercise. There were also examples of the Examen proposed as a spiritual exercise to look for the presence of God. We have also seen that this exercise was effective in the life of many of his companions in their conversion as well as in their deepening spiritual life: some have found it as a way to get rid of sins and vices that prevented progress in spiritual life while others looked at it as an exercise of discerning the presence of God in the midst of their activities. The next chapter also presented the interpretations of some of the prominent second-generation Jesuits who presented the Examen either as a preparation for confession or more as an exercise in discerning the finer nuances of God's way of acting in people's lives. And we have seen that neither of the interpretations rule out the possibility of the other.

In our analysis of the writings of some prominent French mystics, we saw the Examen being presented more as a tool to discern the spiritual union with God. They hardly mention the Examen as an exercise in purgation. On the contrary, they consider it as a means to grow in self-surrender or abandonment. We also saw other examples where spiritual writers focused clearly on the moral aspect of this exercise, calling it as a secret confession or an ascetical practice to purify oneself. These examples clearly show that the examen is understood in the convergence of spiritual and moral culture of this century of spirituality where the overwhelming concern was perfection in spiritual life.

In the 20th Century, the focus of spiritual masters was indeed on perfection and holiness and yet the idea of perfection itself was undergoing substantial change and it was

clearly reflected in the Vatican Council II. A profound sense of “personal vocation” began to take root and the implications were expressed in the way spirituality was lived out. The understanding that there is no universal holiness, no prefabricated model of holiness, rather, each one has to “discover” his/her model, paved the way for the need to discern. If God calls each one personally, calls each within his/her uniqueness, then there is greater need to determine the origin and direction of “interior movements.” There is, therefore, a greater need to discern. Many spiritual masters argued that if the goal of discernment is the gradual and progressive discovery of the plan that God has for humans, then there is greater responsibility on each individual to live the spiritual life – the personal experience of God – with openness. In this sense, when they talk of a daily discernment, it is directly linked to a personal encounter with God in day-to-day events and discovering the pattern of such encounters through spiritual exercises. And such a spiritual exercise, as a number of authors we have analysed presented, is the daily Examen. Such a changing self-understanding of spirituality, coupled with the developments in moral theology – particularly that of the Law of Christ – help us to situate the interpretations of the Ignatian Examen. Such developments invariably point to the fruition of the convergence of morality and spirituality that we talked about in our introductory chapter.

The detailed analysis of the varied documents of the Society of Jesus, from the *Regulae* to Letters of Fathers General, helps us to situate the course of the direction that the Examen took from the mid-sixteenth century. Initially the Examen practice was presented as a companion of confession and later years saw other aspects of this spiritual practice being highlighted; a clear distinction between Examen in daily life and within the ambit of the full Exercises along with the *Directorios* moulded the course of the practice that we have been analysing. The clear shift in the mid-twentieth century, in the way the Examen is perceived as a spiritual discerning prayer, reinforces our argument – the examen is best understood in the crossroads of morality and spirituality.

When we understand discernment as a spiritual process of finding the origin and direction of various interior movements in a person, during the daily examen when one discovers moments of choice between good and evil (sins) or between good and a possible

greater good there takes place a process of realization, an intimate knowledge (*conocimiento interno*) of the origin and possible direction, then the Examen enters into the threshold of discernment. Recognizing the moments of sins, accepting responsibility for such actions is labelled as morality while one has an interior knowledge of the thought processes, of the way thoughts, words, deeds are moving in a given day or period, where necessarily no sin is involved yet one is choosing God's ways, it is invariably beyond morality and well within the ambit of spirituality. At the same time, we have seen that moral and spiritual are no longer seen as water-tight separate entities, but as mutually enriching and often complementing in a person's life; the newly found confluence of these two dimensions of the same human reality is the bedrock on which the examen is being interpreted.

Counterpoising the Examen, either as a moralistic exercise or as purely spiritual exercise, has occurred sometimes in the past, then, we will be moving away from the Ignatian vision of reality, of the integral view of the human person. The Examen is not only of the First Week when one is at the purgative stage, but of the subsequent Weeks when temptations are subtler and the focus shifts from sins and morals to inordinate affections and the concern is of greater freedom to choose that which is more suitable; that is the concern of the Examen that has shifted from morality to spiritual discerning after a due process that involves much examining.

Thus, we can conclude that from Ignatius to the present day the Examen has undergone various interpretations: though Ignatius left no precise rules regarding the Examen, the practice of this spiritual exercise shaped along with the Particular Examen. In other words, from "discerning love" and openness with superiors [*Const.* 582ff.] the formed Jesuits made the five-point daily examen their own, and they based themselves on the affirmations of the *Directorios* which recommended "after the Exercises are over, the practice ought to be for life." And we have seen that this was based on the rules and the legislations made by the Society of Jesus and emerged into a tradition.

Chronology of the Ignatian Examen

Having studied the course of the history of the Examen, we identify distinctive stages in the interpretations of the Ignatian Examen over the centuries. From Ignatius to the present day we can identify four clear periods in the development of the Examen and these four ‘chronological’ stages are in no way encircling specific years. What we intend to capture under these ‘four periods’ is a general trend of the interpretation, based on the analysis of the previous chapters.

The First Period

Under the first period, we include Ignatius and his companions at the beginning of the Society when little was known about this new way of looking at spiritual life. Ignatius proposed the Examen in the *Spiritual Exercises* mainly in the context of the purgative stage. The Particular Examen was indeed innovative – with its detailed procedure of lines – and this had indeed borne much fruit.

The many letters that we have analysed bear witness to the fact that the Examen was one of the most effective pastoral tools of the early Jesuits. The examination of conscience was offered as an effective means to prepare for confession, and this coupled with frequent communion stood out as ‘Ignatian’ in the first century of the Jesuits. We have seen that from the early days of his conversion Ignatius valued the effectiveness of the Examen in the preparation for a general confession and he not only continued to offer this exercise to many but practiced it faithfully in his life. The accounts of Javier in India or Favre in Europe confirm the pastoral effectiveness of this exercise in bringing about conversion. While for Javier the Examen was a means when one begged pardon for one’s sins of the particular day, for Favre it had helped him to remove his own sinfulness. Peter Canisius, in the *Catechism*, proposed the Examen as an exercise to reconcile with God by diligently examining one’s conscience. Francisco de Borja’s diary vouches for the effectiveness of the Examen in removing the old man of sin and putting on Christ.

Yet another characteristic of the first period of the Examen, when the seed planted by Ignatius was just sprouting, is its role in the formation of men who joined the nascent Society. In the *Constitutions* Ignatius prescribed the Examen as a means to grow in fidelity to the call, by insisting on the great importance of this daily practice. The *Constitutions*, instructions on prayer, various rules of Colleges and the guidelines in the context of formation that we have analysed make it amply clear that Ignatius as General and, likewise others later, insisted on the singular importance of the examen in the formation of Jesuits. The *Regulae*, as a collection of documents of the Society prior to the *Constitutions*, further highlight the role of the Examen, and vouch for the proliferation of it in the process of forming men in the Society.

The Second Period

After the initial stage, during the life and immediately after the death of Ignatius, the examen witnessed much attention and usefulness. It was an era when the Society of Jesus rapidly established itself as a force to reckon with and the Jesuit identity was indeed being moulded. As we have seen, the period of the Generalate of Claudio Aquaviva saw much amalgamation in formation, spirituality, educational tradition, and precisely during this period the examen has been interpreted in line with how the ‘Ignatian Spirituality’ was then conceived. During this period, the formulation of documents that oriented the energy of the Society – *Directorio 1599*, *Ratio Studiorum*, General Congregation 6 – also directed the Examen in a definite way.

In such a context the Examen took a definite tilt towards a moralistic approach as our study has revealed. This definite leaning towards moralistic horizon can be understood by the fact that many authors proposed the examen as an exercise of self-knowledge that would lead to the removal of imperfections. Most of these authors who talked about the Examen presented it in the context of the First Week, that is to say, as a means of purifying oneself, with or without the sacrament of reconciliation. Some treated it as the most efficacious means for spiritual advancement, as an inner clock that governs the conscience. For example, Cordeses identified the Examen in the purgative context, where coupled with

mortification, one makes progress in spiritual life, and this implied knowing one's sins through examining the conscience, in line with the moral and spiritual understanding.

We have seen that the *Directorios* treated the examen in multiple ways, and these documents, as guidelines for the subsequent interpretation of the *Exercises*, have indeed exerted much influence. Many of the Directories treated the Examen as a means to purify oneself of venial or mortal sins, and, thereby, clearly related to the Sacrament of reconciliation. We have noted that the Official Directory goes beyond the mere correction of sins and talks about diligence in finding the cause of sins, wherein we can observe an interaction between moralistic and spiritual vision of the examen. Though by and large, the Directories adopted the moralistic approach, the spiritual dimension is clearly visible. And we have also identified the directories as a major element in galvanizing the practice of the five-point Daily Examen.

Another characteristic feature of this second period in the history of the Examen is the development of casuistry and the related developments in moral theology. Right from the start Jesuits have been champions of cases of conscience where the overwhelming concern was to distinguish venial sins from mortal sins, through which a confessor could pacify the conscience of penitents. After the Council of Trent, when there was a clear direction in confessional practices and as moral theology, as a discipline of its own came into existence, authors who dealt with the examination of conscience clearly moved in line with the new teachings. When moral life was reduced to sins and individual acts, the Examen was understood/interpreted as the best tool to analyse one's culpability. Authors like La Palma, La Puente, Rodríguez, and many others understood the Examen as an ascetical practice that had direct relationship with confession.

In this regard it would not be out of place to raise the following questions: Was the Society of Jesus drifting away from its original inspiration or was it unaware of its resources of its Founder? How did the ascetical-mystical tension in the early Society of Jesus influence the course of the Examen? Many point out that the first 60 years of the Society of Jesus clearly changed the course of its destiny mainly because of the ascetical trend that gripped the Order. The research in this regard indicates that indeed there had been muzzling

of the free spirit in the early Society of Jesus. Even though it would make an interesting topic, we would not like to deviate from our focus on the course of the Examen, but rather set it aside for future research.

The Third Period

We can mark a third period in the history of the Examen, one that is distinct from flourishing of manuals of conscience and which is linked to the identity of the Society of Jesus itself. In the 18th century the examen is clearly identified as an integral part of the quest for perfection in spiritual life. Scaramelli, the Italian, dealt the Examen as an ascetical practice that would be needed for perfection; by terming it as the secret confession between humans and God, he left no doubt that for him the Examen was moralistic. For him moral correctness was achieved through a thorough examination. After the golden era of the Spanish World, when the French school, so to say, of Ignatian thoughts took centre stage, the Examen was interpreted as yet another way, as our study has shown.

On the other hand, the French authors who talked of the examen clearly adopted a spiritual vision of the Examen. Lallemand taught that the greatest happiness and perfection of human is to look for glory of God and such perfection needs purity of heart. A heart that is cleaned and pure, through an examination, leads to union with God. For Lallemand, then, the Examen is not only to purify sins of all kind but also to discover the obstacles on the way to such union; the attachments and disturbances of the devil that hinder perfection are revealed in the Examen. Further, when he says that the working of the Holy Spirit is recognized in the examen, he clearly moves beyond sins and morality and he identified two areas where the Examen is effective, in purifying the heart and in the interiority. Another writer who visualized the Examen in the ambit of perfection in spiritual life is Jean Surin, for whom the Examen is an exercise that keeps one away from outward affections. When Surin taught that the Examen helps people to guard against the charm of the world and to walk towards God inwardly, it is clear that he is far from a moralistic view. Terming the Examen as an exercise to differentiate the movements – subtle movements of self-seeking – Surin opts for a Spiritual Examen. For Caussade, the Examen was related to self-giving and self-forgetting: first as a preparation for confession but, more importantly, as a means

to achieve greater abandonment. Purity of conscience and later purity of heart comes through examining self-love, where the focus is on inner agitations. For Caussade, then, the Examen is the means to see through the subtleties of self-love when one is progressing in abandonment.

Thus, we see that the authors of this era interpreted the Examen clearly with distinct approaches and outlook. Many of these authors whom we have analysed could be considered as spokespersons for Ignatian mysticism and their view calls for much attention. Authors like Lallemant, Caussade, and Surin saw the exercise of examining one's conscience quite distinct from their Spanish counterparts. Moreover, their teachings were in dialogue with their contemporary spiritual climate, where the ambience was clearly one of mysticism and union with God. When they interpreted the Examen in relation to discernment, they were not moving away from Ignatian charism but going deeper into the spiritual wealth of their Founder and highlighting another dimension. Yet, during the same period, others like Crasset insisted on the moral dimension, clearly showing that moral and spiritual dimension coexisted.

It was during this period that the Society of Jesus was suppressed and eventually restored. Not only these 41 years – but many subsequent decades – were sort of wilderness for the examen, as the Ignatian thoughts were in forced hibernation. The restored Society fell back on the interpretations of the previous centuries while it clawed back to its mission and we have seen that one prominent figure in those years was Jan Roothaan who helped to rediscover the spirit of Ignatius, thus earning the name “General of the *Exercises*.”

The Fourth Period

After the slump owing to the suppression, when the Society grew back in numbers during the early 19th Century, much interest was shown in the spiritual wellspring of the Society, in studying the inspirational sources like the *Spiritual Exercises*. The fourth period in the chronology of the Examen could be termed as the Golden Age, in a sense, due to greater interest and wider proliferation and practice of the Examen. Starting with the late 19th Century, the effort to critically study the Ignatian sources intensified, and the

Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu made available Ignatian sources that were till then inaccessible. The principles of the *Spiritual Exercises* were perceived from a new perspective thanks to the availability and critical study of the *Autobiography* and the *Diary* and we have maintained that this possibly has influenced the newer interpretations of the Examen. The call for Aggiornamento, undoubtedly, intensified a fresh look into what is proper to Ignatian tradition and, at the same time, as our study has shown, the decades preceding the Second Vatican Council were very fertile.

The most noteworthy character of the fourth period in the life of the Examen is its definite shift towards spiritual discernment. From the mid-1950's we have observed a clear tendency to treat the examination not as a mere tool in observing one's faults rather going beyond the moral aspect to the spiritual dimension – to the realm of the *movements of the spirits*. Howards, Delchard, Görres, González, Penning de Vries, Aschenbrenner, English, Fiorito and the like were confidently pointing to the greater depth of the Examen that had gone unnoticed till then. Görres, highlighting the findings of psychoanalysis, pointed to the great usefulness of the examen in growing in gratefulness while also pointing to its relation to the Contemplation to Attain Love. Delchard insisted that the Examen, as a daily discerning tool, helped to choose God in everyday activities. The continuous attention of faith and keeping God first in all activities are possible through an Examen that pays attention to the language of God and not mere introspection of faults, and thus it becomes both moral and spiritual practice and not an 'either-or' practice.

Penning de Vries in his book on discernment highlighted the role of the Examen in the whole process of spiritual discernment. He points out that the fifteen-minutes prayer could be an occasion to take note of the movements of spirits – of one's experiences of consolations and desolations – and thus become daily moments of discernment. Howard, further affirming the discerning principles, called the examination of conscience as a prayerful election in every day. Aschenbrenner illumined the role of the Examen in observing what goes in one's consciousness – 'how the Lord is affecting and moving us (often quite spontaneously) deep in our affective consciousness' – for what goes in the consciousness is more important than actions. English and González proposed the Examen

as a means to find the will of God by recognizing the movements of the spirits. Fiorito in his analysis of the Ignatian text on the examination clearly showed that conscience for Ignatius was never a moral principle that would judge the rightness or the wrongness of actions and he moves in favour of spiritual principles. Thus, in this fourth period, there was a clear shift towards Examen with discerning vision.

The vast majority of authors, since then, interpret the examen as a spiritual discerning exercise, though they might vary in their emphasis of one or the other principle. Those who differ from such a view would present this exercise as self-observation tool, means to maintain equilibrium in life, to grow in perfection, and so on. It is worth mentioning that in these last decades the Examen has received much attention and some authors would propose the whole dynamic of this spiritual practice as a model for life renewal programs. At present the Examen is looked at as way to find God in the day, to be in touch with one's emotions and to keep track of them, to count the blessings of the day, to be in touch with oneself among all the noise of the modern day, and as an aid in spiritual direction where one learns to observe inner movements. It is worth noting that the latest books on the Examen tend to present the examen as a tool of awareness, of getting in touch with oneself in order to look at various areas that need conversion. The general trend of these myriad ways of doing the Examen is to focus on the good part and not to get stuck on sin and to address the areas of life that need correction from attachments.

We have mapped the course of the Examen from its source, when it was formulated by Ignatius, through centuries where it was interpreted and exercised in moral and spiritual ambit of theology to the present day when there are signs of greater convergence of these two disciplines. Such a historical map helps us to situate the origin and development of the tradition of this spiritual exercise in the Society of Jesus as well as to put in proper perspective the importance associated with it – as a moral and spiritual exercise. Spiritual discernment and moral discernment have a close relationship and it is founded on the fact that both are concerned with the search for God and with knowing and choosing what God wills. The difference between these two are in the approach: moral discernment operates at a generic level, making use of natural faculties and it is valid for all. On the other hand,

spiritual discernment operates at an existential level and relies on analysis of interior movements and therefore tends to be more personal and experiential based. Therefore, when theologians point out that based on the new Law of Christ, there is greater confluence of moral and spiritual dimensions, the examen can be termed as one such confluence. The examen then is a moral exercise based on clear norms and equally a spiritual discerning exercise precisely because it looks at concrete experiences and identify the presence or absence of the Spirit. The examen as a discerning spiritual exercise, then, is an ongoing process.

The Examen as a daily spiritual exercise in moral and spiritual discernment, however, should not be seen in isolation, rather as one of the many exercises that the *Spiritual Exercises* proposes. That is to say, the Examen becomes one such prayers and in no way, can be a substitute for other types of exercises. The examen does not replace discernment rather, through regular exercise of growth in the inner motions, helps in discernment process – the Examen makes people more sensitive to the movements and such co-naturality would help in the process of discerning the subtleties. The practice of the Examen when seen as one of the means to grow in greater *conocimiento interno*, makes it not only a tool in greater discerning, but brings about a greater facility to find God at any hour – the mystical ‘Finding God in all things’ that was part of the spiritually mature Ignatius. Our hope is that this study highlights the importance of the Examen as a building block in the process of discernment and helps people to find God.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

MHSI

1. *Polanci Chronicon*, 6 vols., (1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 1), Madrid, 1894 - 1898.
2. *Monumenta Natalis, Epistolae P. Hieronimi Nadal Societatis Iesu ab anno 1546 ad 1557*, 5 vols., (13, 15, 21, 27, 90), Madrid/Roma, 1898-1962.
3. *Epistolae mixtae ex varii Europae locis (1537-1556)*, 5 vols. (12, 14, 17, 18, 20), Madrid, 1898-1901.
4. *Epistolae PP. Paschasii Broetti, Cladii Jaji, Joannis Codurii et Simonis Rodericii*, (24) 1903.
5. *Epistolae P. Alfonsi Salmeronis*, 2 vols. (30, 32), Madrid, 1906-1907.
6. *Monumenta Lainii*, 8 vols. (44, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 53, 55) Madrid, 1912-1917.
7. *Fabri Monumenta: Beati Petri Fabri Epistulae, Memoriale et Processus*, (48) Madrid, 1914.
8. *Polanci Complementa*, 2 vols. (52, 54), Madrid, 1916-1917.
9. *Constitutiones: I - Monumenta Constitutionum praevie*, (63), Roma, 1934.
10. *Constitutiones: II - Textus hispanus*, (64), Roma, 1936.
11. *Constitutiones: III - Textus latinus*, (65), Roma, 1938.
12. *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola – I*, (66), Roma, 1943.
13. *Epistolae S. Francisci Xaverii*, (67) Roma, 1944.
14. *Epistolae S. Francisci Xaverii*, (68) Roma, 1945.
15. *Constitutiones: IV - Regulae Societatis Iesu*, (71), Roma, 1948.

16. *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola – II*, (73), Roma, 1951.
17. *Monumenta Exercitiae (II Directoria 1540 – 1599)*, (76), Roma, 1955.
18. *P. Petrus de Ribadeneyra ad P. Francisco Girón*, (85) Roma, 1960.
19. *Simonis Rodrigues Commentarium de Origine et Progressu Societatis Iesu (1577)*, (85) Roma, 1960.
20. *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola – III*, (85), Roma, 1960.
21. *S. Ignatii epistolae et instructiones*, 12 vols., (22, 26, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 30, 40, 42), Madrid, 1903-1911.
22. *Fontes Narrativi de S. Ignatio de Loyola – IV*, (93), Roma, 1965.
23. *Monumenta Exercitiae (I Exercitia Spiritualia: Textuum antiquissimorum nova editio)*, (100), Roma, 1969.
24. *Fontes Documentales de S. Ignatio de Loyola*, (115), Roma, 1977.

Others

1. AA.VV., *Cartas selectas de los padres generales: a los padres y hermanos de la Compañía de Jesús*, Oña, 1917.
2. AA.VV., *Select Letters of our V. R. Father General to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus*, Woodstock College, 1900.
3. ÁLVAREZ, BALTASAR, *Escritos espirituales* (intro. ed. Camilo Abad & Faustino Boado), Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1961.
4. AQUAVIVA, CLAUDIO, “Ad Curandos Animae Morbos,” *Institutum*, vol. I, pp. 395-440.
5. ARRUPE, PEDRO, *La identidad del Jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 1981.
6. ASCHENBRENNER, GEORGE A., “Consciousness Examen,” in *RfR* 31/1 (1972) pp. 14-21.
7. -----, “Consciousness Examen” in Fleming, David L. (ed.), *Notes on the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius*, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1983, pp. 175-185.
8. -----, “Consciousness Examen: Becoming God’s Heart for the World,” in *RfR* 47/6 (1988) pp. 801-810.
9. -----, “Examen del consciente,” in *Manresa* 83 (2011) pp. 259-272.
10. BASANESE, LAURENT – LAURAS, P. ANTOINE (trans.), “Epitome de l’Institut de la Compagnie de Jésus: Traduction française intégrale du texte latin (édition 1962),” in *Ignaziana Suplementos* 1, 2015.

11. BRAUNSBERGER, OTTO, *Beati Petri Canisii, Societatis Iesu: Epistulae et Acta*, volumes 1-8, Herder, 1896.
12. CABARRÚS, CARLOS RAFAEL, "El Examen, una vía de acceso al discernimiento," in *Sal Terrae* 12 (1998) pp. 897-907.
13. CALVERAS, JOSÉ, *Los Tres modos de orar de los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio*, Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1951.
14. -----, *Práctica de los Ejercicios Intensivos* (3 ed), Barcelona: Balmes, 1952.
15. -----, *Practica de los Ejercicios de S. Ignacio*, Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1962.
16. CAUSSADE, JEAN PIERRE, *El abandono de sí mismo en la providencia divina: mirado como el medio más fácil para santificarse* (obra inédita del R.P. Juan Pedro Caussade; y arreglada por H. Ramiere; y aumentada con tres cartas del R.P. Caussade; traducido del original francés por una religiosa del 2º Monasterio de la Visitación de Santa María de Madrid), Madrid: Imprenta de la Viuda e Hijo de Aguado, 1883.
17. -----, *Abandonment to Divine Providence* (trans. by E. J. Strickland), St. Louis, Herder Book Company, 1921.
18. -----, *A Treatise on Prayer from the Heart: a Christian Mystical Tradition Recovered for All* (trans., edited & intro. Robert M. McKeon), Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1998.
19. CRASSET, JEAN, *Considerazione cristiane per tutti i giorni dell'Anno*, 3 vols., Venezia: Paolo Baglioni, 1716.
20. -----, *The Devotion of Calvary*, Liverpool: Booker, 1844.
21. -----, *Devout Meditations for Everyday in the Year* (trns. By Anna H Doorsey), New York: P. O'Shea, 1864.
22. -----, *La dulce y santa muerte* (trans. by Basilio Sotomayor), Valencia: Librería de la viuda de D. José Badal, 1867.
23. -----, *Consideraciones cristianas: para todos los días del año con los Evangelios de los domingos*, Madrid: Saturnino Calleja, 1900.
24. DELCHARD, ANTOINE, "L'election dans la vie quotidienne," in *Christus* 14 (1957) pp. 206-219.
25. DIVARKAR, PARMANDANDA R., *A Pilgrim's Testament: The Memoirs of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, Saint Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1995.
26. DOMÍNGUEZ MORANO, CARLOS., "El mucho examinar: funcione y riesgos" *Manresa* 62/3 n° 244 (1990) pp. 273-287.
27. ENGLISH, JOHN., *Discernment and the Examen*, Guelph: Loyola House, 1985.

28. FABRO, PEDRO, *Memorial* (trans. & anot. Amadeo, J.H. – Fiorito, M.A.; intr. García de Castro, José), Bilbao: Mensajero, 2014.
29. FIORITO, MIGUEL ÁNGEL, “La conciencia y su examen según san Ignacio,” in *Boletín de espiritualidad* 61 (1979) pp. 1-40.
30. FRANCISCO DE BORJA, *Tratados espirituales* (introducción y edición de Cándido de Dalmases), Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1964.
31. -----, *San Francisco de Borja: Diario espiritual (1564-1570)* (edición crítica, estudio y notas de Manuel Ruiz Jurado), Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 1997.
32. FRANCIS XAVIER, *The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, trans by M. Joseph Costelloe, Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1993.
33. FRANCISCO JAVIER, *Cartas de San Francisco Javier apóstol de las Indias*, recogidas por Francisco Cuttillas, Barcelona: Viuda e Hijos de J. Subirana, 1884.
34. -----, *Cartas de San Francisco Javier apóstol de las Indias*, recogidas por Francisco Cuttillas, Barcelona: Viuda e Hijos de J. Subirana, 1884.
35. -----, *Cartas y escritos de san Francisco Javier* (ed. Felix Zubillaga), Madrid: BAC, 1953.
36. -----, *The Letters and instructions of Francis Xavier* (trans by M. Joseph Costelloe), Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1993.
37. -----, *Obras completas*, Braga/São Paulo: Editorial AO/Edições Loyola, 2006.
38. GAGLIARDI, ACHILLE, *Commentaire des exercices spirituels d’Ignace de Loyola (1590)*, (intro. André Derville /trans. Francis Joseph Legran), Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1996.
39. GONZÁLEZ DÁVILA, GIL, *Platicas sobre las Reglas de la Compañía de Jesús* (intro. y notas de Camilio M.^a Abad), Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1964.
40. GÖRRES, ALBERT, “Über die Gewissenserforschung nach der Weise des hl. Ignatius von Loyola,” in *Geist und Leben* 29 (1956) pp. 283-289.
41. HOWARD, ROY J., “Examination of Conscience: Prayerful Election in Everyday Terms,” in *Woodstock Letters* 88 (1959) pp. 24-36.
42. IGNACIO DE LOYOLA, *Ejercicios espirituales de San Ignacio de Loyola* (anotados por Juan Roothaan; intro. y traducción de las notas por Teodoro Toni), Bilbao: Mensajero del Corazón de Jesús, 1946.
43. -----, *Ejercicios espirituales* (intro., texto, notas y vocabulario por Cándido de Dalmases), 5^a ed., Santander: Sal Terrae, 1985.
44. -----, *El Peregrino – Autobiografía de San Ignacio de Loyola* (ed. Josep M^a Rambla Blanch), Bilbao-Santander: Mensajero-Sal Terrae, 1990.

45. -----, *Constituciones de la Compañía de Jesús – Introducción y notas para su lectura*, (ed. Arzubialde, S. – Corella, J. – García Lomas – J. M.), Bilbao-Santander: Mensajero-Sal Terrae, 1998.
46. -----, *La Intimidad del Peregrino – Diario espiritual de San Ignacio de Loyola, Versión y Comentarios*, (Ed. Thió de Pol, Santiago), Bilbao-Santander: Mensajero-Sal Terrae, 1998.
47. -----, *Personal Writings* (trans. Endean, Philip – Munitiz, Joseph), Penguin Books: Suffolk, 2004.
48. -----, *Letters and Instructions*, (trans. Palmer, Martin – Padberg, John – McCarthy, John), Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2006.
49. -----, *Obras Completas*, (ed. Iparraguirre, Ignacio – Ruiz Jurado, Manuel), Madrid: BAC, 2014⁶.
50. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, *Letters of St. Ignatius of Loyola* (trans. Young, William J.), Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959.
51. -----, *The Spiritual Diary of St. Ignatius of Loyola* (ed. & trans. Joseph A. Munitiz), London: Inigo Enterprises, 1987.
52. -----, *The Spiritual Diary of St. Ignatius Loyola: Text and Commentary* (ed. Simon Decloux), Rome: CIS, 1990.
53. -----, *A Pilgrim's Testament: The Memoirs of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, (trans. Parmandanda R Diwarkar), Saint Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1995.
54. IGNAZIO DI LOYOLA, *Esercizi Spirituali: ricerca sulle fonti* (ed. Pietro Schiavone), Roma: San Paolo, 1995.
55. -----, *Gli Scritti* (ed. gesuiti della Provincia s'Italia), Roma: AdP, 2007.
56. LA PALMA, LUIS DE, *Tratado del examen de la conciencia: de manera que lo enseña el bienaventurado padre san Ignacio en su libro de los ejercicios* (edición de José María Soler-Santiago Rodríguez), Barcelona: Impresa de Subirana Hermanos, 1903.
57. -----, *Breve extracto del tratado de los exámenes de conciencia*, Barcelona: Tipo Católica Casals, 1948.
58. -----, *Obras completas del Padre Luis de la Palma* (edición de Camilo María Abad), Madrid: Biblioteca de autores españoles, 1961.
59. -----, *Obras del Padre Luis de la Palma*, (edición de Francisco X. Rodríguez Molero), Madrid: BAC, 1967.
60. LA PUENTE, LUIS DE, *Directorio espiritual de los Santos Sacramentos de la confesión y comunión y del Santo Sacrificio de la misa: con ejercicio de la oración y meditación que los acompaña*, Madrid: Real Arbitrio de Beneficencia, 1804.

61. -----, *Meditaciones espirituales de Luis de la Puente*, Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1865.
62. -----, *Vida del V.P. Baltasar Álvarez, de la Compañía de Jesús*, Madrid: Razón y Fe, 1920.
63. -----, *Guía espiritual: en la que se trata de la oración, meditación y contemplación de las divinas visitas y gracias extraordinarias, de las mortificaciones y obras heroicas que las acompañan*, Madrid: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1926.
64. -----, *Sentimientos y avisos espirituales; seguidos de algunas breves meditaciones sobre temas de los ejercicios de San Ignacio*, Palencia: Afrodisio Aguado, 1935.
65. -----, *Meditaciones de los misterios de nuestra santa fe con la práctica de la oración mental sobre ellos*, (8th ed.), vol. I, Madrid: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1947.
66. -----, “Escritos varios inéditos del venerable Padre Luis de la Puente” (Edición de Camilo María Abad), *Revista Miscelánea Comillas* 19 (1953) pp. 1-117.
67. LALLEMANT, LOUIS Lallemant, Louis, *Doctrine spirituelle* (nouvelle édition augmentée, établie et présentée par Dominique Salin), Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2011.
68. -----, *Doctrina espiritual* (9ª edición de Dominique Salin), Bilbao/Santander/Madrid: Mensajero/Sal Terrae/UPCo, 2017.
69. LALLEMANT, LUIS, *Spiritual Doctrine of Father Luis Lallemant of the Company of Jesus* (trans./ed. William Faber, Frederick), London: Burns & Lambert, 1855.
70. -----, *Doctrina espiritual del P. Luis Lallemant, S. J.*, (traducción y prólogo de Tirso Arellano, 2ª edición), Bilbao: Ediciones Desclée de Brouwer, 1963.
71. LONGRIDGE, W. H., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, A R Mowbray & Co Ltd., Oxford, 1955.
72. -----, *Ejercicios espirituales de san Ignacio de Loyola* (comentario literal al texto y notas complementarias), Málaga, 1986.
73. LOP SEBASTIA, MIGUEL, *Los Directorios de Ejercicios 1540-1599*, Bilbao/ Santander: Mensajero/ Sal Terrae, 2000.
74. MARTÍN-MORENO, JUAN MANUEL, “‘Todo modo de examinar la conciencia:’ El examen ignaciano, un modo de orar la vida,” in *Sal Terrae* 82/7 (1994) pp. 559-569.
75. NADAL, JEROME, *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels* Vol. I, II, III (trans./ed. by Frederick A. Homann; Introductory study by Walter Melion), Philadelphia: St. Joseph’s University Press, 2003.
76. NADAL, JÉRONIMO, *Orationis observationes* (ed. Miguel Nicolau), Roma: IHSI, 1964.

77. -----, *Las pláticas del P. Jerónimo Nadal: la globalización ignaciana*, (edición y traducción Miguel Lop Sebastiá), Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 2011.
78. PADBERG, JOHN W., *For Matters of Greater Moment*, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1994.
79. -----, *Together as a Companionship: A History of the Thirty-First, Thirty-Second, and Thirty-Third General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1994.
80. -----, *Jesuit Life and Mission Today: The Decrees of the 31st-35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009.
81. PEDRO CANISIO, *Autobiografía y otros escritos* (versión y comentarios de Benigno Hernández Montes), Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 2004.
82. -----, *Doctrina Cristiana* (edición crítica y notas de las versiones castellanas de Rafael Zafra Molina), Palma de Mallorca: Olañeta, 2014.
83. PEDRO FABRO, *En el Corazón de la Reforma, Recuerdos espirituales del Pedro Fabro SJ* (trans. Antonio Albuquerque), Bilbao/ Santander: Mensajero/ Sal Terrae. 1998.
84. PENNING DE VRIES, PIET, *Discernimiento: dinamica existencial de la doctrina y del espíritu de san Ignacio de Loyola* (trans. Horacio Bojorge – Ignacio Iparraguirre), Bilbao: El Mensajero del Corazón de Jesús, 1967.
85. PUJADAS, LUIS, “Examen Particular y cotidiano: contiene en si tres tiempos y dos veces examinarse” in *Manresa* 10 (1934) pp. 32-39.
86. REGLAS DE LA COMPAÑÍA DE JESÚS, Madrid, 1751.
87. REGULAE SUPERIORUM SOCIETATIS JESU, Roma, 1805.
88. RIBADENEIRA, PEDRO DE, *Flos Sanctorum de las vidas de los santos*, Barcelona, 1751.
89. -----, *Vida de San Ignacio de Loyola, Fundador de la Compañía de Jesús*, Madrid: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1942.
90. -----, *Historia de la Contrarreforma*, Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1945.
91. -----, *The Life of Ignatius of Loyola* (trans. Claude Pavur), St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2006.
92. -----, *Historia de la Contrarreforma*, (intro. Eusebio Rey) Madrid: BAC, 2009.
93. RODRÍGUEZ, ALONSO, *Cartas espirituales y pláticas de San Alonso Rodríguez*, Buenos Aires: Cultural, 1944.
94. RODRÍGUEZ, ALONSO, *Ejercicio de perfección y virtudes cristianas*, 3 vols., Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1861.

95. -----, *Practice of Perfection and Christian Virtues* (trans. Joseph Rickaby) 2 vols., London: The Manresa Press, 1929.
96. -----, *Ejercicio de perfección y virtudes cristianas: dividido en tres partes* (7 ed.), Madrid: Apostolado de la Prensa, 1950.
97. -----, *Ejercicio de perfección y virtudes cristianas* (5 ed.), Madrid: Testimonio, 2012.
98. SCARAMELLI, GIOVANNI BATTISTA, *Discernimento degli spiriti*, Venezia, 1800.
99. -----, *Directorio ascético*, Torino: Giacinto Marietti, 1879.
100. -----, *Directorio místico*, Torino: Giacinto Marietti, 1879.
101. SCARAMELLI, JOHN BAPTIST, *Directorium Asceticum*, vols. I-IV, Dublin: William B. Kelly, 1870-1871.
102. SOMMERVOGEL, CARLOS, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus by Carlos Sommervogel*, vols. 1-9, Brussels: Société Belge de Librairie, 1890-1900.
103. ST LOUIS, DONALD, "The Ignatian Examen: A Method of Theological Reflection," in *The Way Supplement* 55 (1986) pp. 66-76.
104. -----, "The Ignatian Examen" in Philip Sheldrake (ed.), *The Way of Ignatius Loyola*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991, pp. 154-164.
105. SUAREZ, FRANCISCO., *Los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio. Una defensa*, Josep Giménez Meliá (Ed), Mensajero-Sal Terrae: Bilbao/Santander, 2003.
106. SURIN, JEAN JOSEPH, *Catechisme spiritual de la perfection Chrestienne*, Paris: 1801.
107. -----, *Le Predicateur de L'Amour de Dieu*, Paris, 1824.
108. -----, *The Foundations of the Spiritual Life*, London: Burns, 1844.
109. -----, *Guide spirituel pour la perfection*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1963.
110. TETLOW, JOSEPH A., "The Postmodern Prayer: American Jesuit Identity and the Examen of Conscience, 1920-1990," in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 26/1 (1994), pp. 1- 67.
111. -----, "The Examen of Particulars," *RoR*, 56/3 1997, 230-250.
112. THE JESUIT RATIO STUDIORUM OF 1599 (trans. Allan P. Farrell), Washington DC: Conference of Major Superiors of Jesuits, 1970.
113. THESAURUS SPIRITUALIS SOCIETATIS IESU, Santander, 1936.
114. TOWNSEND, DAVID KEITH, "The Examen and the Exercises: a Reappraisal," in *The Way Supplement* 52 (1985) pp. 53-63.
115. -----, "The Examen Re-examined," in *CIS* 55 (1987) pp. 11-64.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Ignatian/Jesuit Spirituality

1. AA. VV. *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus – Incorporation of a Spirit*, Roma: CIS, 1993.
2. -----, *Estudios sobre ejercicios (semana celebrada en Loyola con ocasión de IV centenario de la Compañía)*, Barcelona, 1941.
3. -----, *The Jesuit in India*, London: Burns & Lambert, 1852.
4. -----, “La visión de la Storta en sus fuentes,” in *Manresa* 84 (2012) pp. 363-370.
5. -----, *Corrientes espirituales en la España del siglo XVI*, Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1963.
6. ABAD, CAMILO MARÍA, “El P. Luis de la Puente y los Ejercicios espirituales,” in *Manresa* 1 (1925) pp. 236-247.
7. -----, “Gil González Dávila, S.I.: sus pláticas sobre las reglas de la Compañía de Jesús,” in AA.VV., *Corrientes espirituales en la España del siglo XVI*, Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1963, pp. 363-391.
8. ACOSTA, JOSÉ DE, *Obras del P. José de Acosta* (estudio preliminar y edición del P. Francisco Mateos) Madrid: Biblioteca autores españoles, 1954.
9. AICARDO, JOSÉ MANUEL, *Comentario a las constituciones de la Compañía de Jesús*, vols. 1-6, Madrid: Blass, 1919-1932.
10. ALBAREDA, ANSELM M., “Intorno alla scuola di orazione metodica stabilita a Monserrato dall’abate Garsias Jimenez de Cisneros (1493 - 1510)” in *AHSI*, 25 (1956) pp. 254-316.
11. -----, *Historia de Montserrat*, nueva edición de Josep Massot I Muntaner, Barcelona: Abadía de Montserrat, 1974.
12. -----, *Sant Ignasi a Montserrat*, Barcelona: Abadía de Montserrat, 1990.
13. ALBERS, PEDRO, “El P. Roothaan y los ejercicios espirituales de San Ignacio,” in *Manresa* 5 (1929) pp. 348-372.
14. ALBURQUERQUE, ANTONIO, *Diego Laínez, Primer Biógrafo de San Ignacio de Loyola (1547)*, Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/ Sal Terrae, 2005.
15. ALDEN, DAURIL, “Some considerations concerning Jesuit Enterprise in Asia,” pp. 53-62.
16. ALMIÑANA, VICENTE J. – MORENO, ANTONIO J., “Un problema de oración en la Compañía de Jesús,” in *Manresa* 42 (1970) 223-242.
17. ALPHONSO, HERBERT, “La Preghiera nella Dinamica degli Esercizi Spirituali di Sant’Ignazio”, in *Ignazio di Loyola un mistico in Azione* (Barlone, Sandro ed.), Città Nuova editrice, Roma, 245-253.

18. ÁLVAREZ, GABRIEL, *Historia de la provincial de Aragón* (ed. by Sánchez Coello), Barcelona, 1944.
19. ARAUJO SANTOS, ADELSON, “Mas él examinándolo bien...” (*Au 27*): *el examen de conciencia en la espiritualidad ignaciana*, Bilbao: Mensajero; Santander: Sal Terrae; Madrid: UPCo, 2016.
20. ARGENT, MARK., “Reclaiming the Particular Examen,” in *The Way* 52/4 (2013) pp. 57-69.
21. ARRUPE, PEDRO, “Carta sobre la inculturación,” in *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, 1981, pp. 95-102.
22. -----, “Notas sobre el modo de dar los ejercicios hoy,” in *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, 1981, pp. 231-485.
23. ARZUBIALDE, SANTIAGO, *Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio – Historia y Análisis* (2ª ed.), Mensajero/Sal Terrae: Bilbao/Santander, 2009.
24. ASTRAIN, ANTONIO, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la asistencia de España*, vols. 1-7, Madrid: Razón y Fé, 1905-1925.
25. -----, “A la memoria del gran asceta Diego Álvarez de Paz S. I. en el tercer centenario de su muerte,” in *Gregorianum* 1/3 (1920), pp. 394-424.
26. AU, WILKIE, “The Ignatian Method: A Way of Proceeding,” in *Presence* 16/3 (2010), pp. 6-17.
27. BAKKER, LEO, *Libertad y experiencia: historia de la redacción de las reglas de discreción de espíritus en Ignacio de Loyola*, Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 1995.
28. BANGERT, WILLIAM V., *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 1981.
29. -----, *Claude Jay and Alfonso Salmeron: Two Early Jesuits*, Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1985.
30. -----, *History of the Society of Jesus*, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1986.
31. -----, *Jerome Nadal, SJ., 1507 – 1580: Tracking the First Generation of Jesuits*, Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1992.
32. BARLONE, SANDRO (ed.), *Ignazio di Loyola, un mistico in Azione To the Other Towns: a life of Blessed Peter Favre*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002.
33. BAQUER, JOSEP, *El examen y la revisión de vida*, Bilbao: Mensajero, 1996.
34. BARLONE, SANDRO (ed.), *Ignazio di Loyola, un mistico in Azione*, Città Nuova, Roma, 1994.
35. BARRAUD, C. W., *Meditations on the Mysteries of our Holy Faith Together with a Treatise on Mental Prayer Based on the Work of the Venerable Father Louis de Ponte, SJ.*, 6 volumes, New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1916.

36. BARRY, WILLIAM., "Theology of Discernment" in *The Way Supplement* 64, (1989) pp. 129-140.
37. -----, *A Companion to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Finding God in All Things*, Notre dame: Ave Maria Press, 1994.
38. -----, *Discernment in prayer: paying attention to God*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1992.
39. BARTÓK, TIBOR, "Louis Lallemant and Jesuit Spirituality," in *The Way* 56/1 (2017) pp. 31-44.
40. -----, "Louis Lallemant and his Doctrine spirituelle: Myths and Facts," in Maryks, A *Companion to*, pp. 112-138.
41. BECHTLE, REGINA, "Theological Trends: Convergence in Theology and Spirituality," in *The Way* 23 (1985) pp. 305-314.
42. BEGHEYN, PAUL – FORESTA, PATRIZIO – MARYKS, ROBERT, "Peter Canisius to Ignatius of Loyola Vienna February 1556: An Unpublished Letter: A Presentation of the 'Canisius Project,'" in *AHSI* 69 (2000) pp. 223-235.
43. BEGHEYN, PAUL, "The Controversies on Prayer after the Death of Ignatius and their Effect on the Concept of Jesuit Mission," in Vella, Arthur G. (ed.), *History and Spirituality of the Society of Jesus: The Chantilly Colloquim: September 1992*, Part I, Rome, 1993.
44. -----, "Bibliography on the Spirituality of the Jesuits, Publications in English, 1900-1993," in *Studies in the Spirituality of the Jesuits*, 28/1 (1996) pp. 1-42.
45. -----, "Canisius (Kanis), Pedro," in *DHCJ* vol. I, pp. 633-635.
46. -----, "Kolvenbach, Peter-Hans," in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1705-1706.
47. -----, *Petrus Canisius en zijn catechismus: De geschiedenis van een bestseller / Peter Canisius and his catechism: the history of a bestseller*, Nijmegen: Museum Het Valkhof, 2005.
48. -----, "Bibliography on the History of the Society of Jesus, 2014," in *Ignaziana*, 2014.
49. -----, "Bibliography on the History of the Society of Jesus, 2015," in *Ignaziana*, 2015.
50. BERGUECIO, JULIO JIMENEZ, *Louis Lallemant, S.J. 1588-1635: Estudios sobre su vida y su "Doctrine Spirituelle"*, Santiago: Pontifica Universidad Católica de Chile, 1988.
51. BERNARD, CHARLES ANDRÉ, *L'antropologia dei maestri spirituali*, Milano: Paoline, 1991.
52. BERTRAND, DOMINIQUE, "S'examiner," in *Christus* 97 (1978) pp. 111-120.
53. -----, "Bernardine Discernment: Between the Desert Fathers and Ignatius of Loyola," in *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 36/3 (2001) pp. 325-336.
54. BOERO, GIUSEPPE, *The Life of the Blessed Peter Favre*, London: Burns and Oates, 1873.

55. BONÉ PINA, IGNACIO, "Vulnerables y hospitalarios. Espiritualidad ignaciana y alteridad," in *Manresa* 80 (2008) pp. 109-124.
56. BOYLE, MARJORIE O'ROURKE, *Loyola's Acts: The Rhetoric of the Self*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
57. BRACKEN, JAMES A., "The Double Principle and Foundation in the Spiritual Exercises," in *Woodstock Letters* 98/3 (1969) pp. 319-353.
58. BRAVO, BERNARDO, "El P. Antonio Cordeses, S.I., y el grupo espiritual de Gandía," in AA.VV., *Corrientes espirituales en la España del siglo XVI*, Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1963, pp. 393-395.
59. BREATHNACH, SARAH, *The Simple Abundance Journal Gratitude*, New York: Warner Books, 1996.
60. BREEMEN, PETER G. VAN, "The Examination of Conscience" in *RfR* 49 (1990) pp. 600-609.
61. BRODERICK, WILLIAM., "First Week: Rules of Discernment" in *The Way Supplement*, 48 (1983) pp. 28-38.
62. BRODRICK, JAMES, *The Progress of the Jesuits (1556-1579)*, New York: Longmans Green, 1947.
63. -----, *The Origin of the Jesuits*, New York: Longmans Green, 1953.
64. BUCKLEY, MICHAEL J., "Contemplation to Attain Love" in *The Way Supplement* 24, (1975) pp. 92-104.
65. -----, "The structure of Rules for Discernment," *The Way Supplement* 20 (1970) pp. 19-37.
66. -----, "Discernimiento," in *DEI*, pp. 607-611.
67. BURKE, EILEEN, "Mujer," in *DEI*, pp. 1303-1309.
68. CAHAO, IGNACIO - COUPEAU, CARLOS, "Loyola," in *DEI*, pp. 1143-1149.
69. CALETI, AGOSTINO., *I Tre Modo di Orare negli Esercizi Spirituali di S. Ignazio di Loyola*, Napoli: CIS, 2006.
70. CALVERAS, JOSÉ, *La oración preparatoria en los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio*, Bilbao: La Editorial Vizcaína, 1926.
71. -----, *Examen de la oración. Declaración y práctica de la quinta adición de los Ejercicios de San Ignacio* (5 ed.) Barcelona: Balmes, 1941.
72. -----, "Los 'Confesionales' y los Ejercicios de San Ignacio," *AHSI* 17 (1948) pp. 51-101.
73. -----, *Que fruto se de sacar de los Ejercicios Espirituales de san Ignacio: Texto Para Cursillos de Ejercicios*, Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1950.

74. -----, *Afectividad y el Corazón Según Santo Tomás en Relación con los Conocimientos Actuales*, Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1951.
75. -----, *La Oración Mental Ignaciana*, Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1951.
76. -----, *San Ignacio en Montserrat y Manresa: a través de los Procesos de Canonización*, Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1956.
77. -----, *Ejercicio espirituales, Directorio y Documentos de S. Ignacio de Loyola; Glosa y Vocabulario de los Ejercicios*, Barcelona: Balmes, 1958.
78. -----, “Estudios sobre la redacción de los textos Latinos de los Ejercicios anteriores a la Vulgata,” *AHSI* 31 (1962) pp. 3-99.
79. CARO BAROJA, JULIO– BERISTAIN, ANTONIO (eds.), *Ignacio de Loyola, Magister Artium en París 1528 – 1535*, San Sebastian: Kutxa, 1991.
80. CARRIKER, ROBERT C., (ed.), *Woodstock Letters: A Historical Journal of Jesuit Education and Missionary Activities. Guide to the Microfiche Collection*, Maryland: CIS, 1987.
81. CEBOLLADA SILVESTRE, PASCUAL, “Ejercitador,” in *DEI*, pp. 708-715.
82. -----, “El examen ignaciano: revisión y equilibrio personal” in *Manresa* 81/2 (2009) pp. 127-139.
83. -----, “Después de De Guibert, ¿qué? Aportación española a la práctica de los Ejercicios” in *Manresa* 83/2 (2011) pp. 177-186.
84. -----, “La significación de Jan Philip Roothan, SJ en la historia de los ejercicios espirituales ignacianos,” in *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 91/357 (2016) pp. 391- 410.
85. CERECEDA, F., “Carta necrológica sobre el P. Luis de la Palma,” en *Manresa* 17 (1945) pp. 155-161.
86. CHAPPIN, MARCEL, “Roothaan, Juan Felipe,” in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1665-1671.
87. CHÉRCOLES, ADOLFO M. – RAMBLA, JOSEPH M., “Examen de conciencia” in *DEI*, pp. 841-850.
88. CHÉRCOLES, ADOLFO, “Conocimiento interno,” in *DEI*, pp. 400-408.
89. -----, “Examen general de consciencia para limpiarse y para mejor se confesar [32],” in *Manresa* 64/3 (1992) pp. 353-378.
90. CHIA, SZE SIONG, *The Ignatian Examen: A Historical Review and its Contemporary Applications*, Madrid: UPCo, 2015.
91. CÍA BLASCO, JAVIER, “Itinerario biográfico” in Oberholzer, Paul (ed.), *Diego Laínez (1512-1565) and his Generalate*, Roma: IHSI, 2015, pp. 32-42.
92. CLANCY, THOMAS H., “The Proper Grace of the Jesuit Vocation According to Jerome Nadal,” in *Woodstock Letters*, 86/2 (1957) pp. 107-118.

93. -----, *An Introduction to Jesuit Life: The Constitutions and History through 435 years*, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976.
94. CLARE, JAMES, *The Science of Spiritual Life – According to the Spiritual Exercises*, London: The Manresa Press, 1924.
95. CLARKE, THOMAS E., “The Ignatian Exercises – Contemplation and Discernment” in *RfR* 31 (1972) pp. 62-69.
96. COATHALEM, HERVÉ, *Comentario del libro de los Ejercicios*, Buenos Aires: Apostolado de la Oración, 1965.
97. CODINA, ARTURO, *Los orígenes de los ejercicios espirituales de S. Ignacio de Loyola: estudio histórico*, Barcelona: Biblioteca Balmes, 1926.
98. -----, “Sant Ignasi a Montserrat” in *AHSI* VII (1938) pp. 104-117; 257-267.
99. CODINA, GABRIEL, “The ‘Modus Parisiensis,’” in Duminuco, Vincent J. (ed.), *The Jesuit ‘Ratio Studiorum’: 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2000, pp. 28-49.
100. COLEMAN, GERARD, *Walking with Inigo, a Commentary on the Autobiography of Ignatius*, Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2001.
101. COLERIDGE, HENRY JAMES, *The Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*, 2 vols., London: Burns & Oates, 1881.
102. COLPO, MARIO, “Piccolomini, Francisco,” in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1629-1630.
103. CONAWAY, BARRY, *The Hidden Way of Love: Jean-Pierre de Caussade’s Spirituality of Abandonment*, Oxford: SLG, 1999.
104. CONNOR, JAMES, *The Dynamism of Desire: Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J. on the Spiritual Exercise of Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2006.
105. CONROY, MAUREEN, *The Discerning Heart: Discovering a Personal God*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 1993.
106. -----, “Ignatius’ Deepening Discerning Heart,” in Conroy, Maureen, *The Discerning Heart: Discovering a Personal God*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 1993, pp. 3-57.
107. CONWELL, JOSEPH F., *Contemplation in Action: a Study of Ignatian Prayer*, Spokane: Gonzaga University, 1957.
108. -----, *Prayer Proper to the Society of Jesus According to Jerome Nadal S.I.: 1507-1580*, Roma: Pontifical Gregorian University, 1957.
109. -----, *Impelling Spirit: Revisiting a Founding Experience, 1539, Ignatius de Loyola and His Companions: an Exploration into the Spirit and Aims of the Society of Jesus as Revealed in the Founders’ Proposed Papal Letter Approving the Society*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997.

110. -----, *Walking in the Spirit: a reflection on Jerónimo Nadal's phrase "Contemplatives likewise in action,"* St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2003.
111. -----, "Deliberaciones 1539," in *DEI*, pp. 549-553.
112. CORELLA, JESÚS, "Consolación," in *DEI*, pp. 413-424.
113. COSTA, MAURIZIO, *Aspetti dello stile di elezione di S. Ignazio nell'autobiografia*, Roma: CIS, 1974.
114. -----, *Direzione spirituale e discernimento*, Roma: ADP, 1993.
115. -----, "Ignacio Iparraguirre S.J. davanti agli Esercizi Spirituali," in McCoog, Thomas, (ed.), *Ite Inflaminate Omnia: Selected Historical Papers from Conferences Held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, Rome: IHSI, 2010, pp. 27- 44.
116. -----, *Voce tra due silenzi*, Bologna: EDB, 2010.
117. COUPEAU, CARLOS JOSÉ, "Espiritualidad Ignaciana: guía para investigadores," in *Ignaziana* 8 (2009) pp. 73-129.
118. DALMASES, CÁNDIDO DE, "Ignatius en Barcelona," in *AHSI* 10 (1941) pp. 283-293.
119. -----, "Esortazioni Lainez: Examen Constituzioni," in *AHSI* 35 (1966) pp. 132 -185.
120. -----, *El Padre Maestro Ignacio: Breve Biografía Ignaciana*, Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1979.
121. -----, *Ignatius of Loyola: Founder of the Jesuits*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985.
122. -----, "Calveras Santacana, José," in *DHCJ* vol. I, p. 606.
123. -----, "Borja, Francisco de," in *DHCJ*, vol. II, pp. 1605-1611.
124. -----, "Polanco, Juan Alfonso de," in *DHCJ*, vol. IV, pp. 3168-3169.
125. DANIELUK, R., "MHSI – uno sguardo di insieme sulla collana," in *AHSI* 81 (2012) pp. 249-271.
126. DECLoux, SIMON, "A commentary on the Spiritual Diary," in Decloux, Simon, *The spiritual diary of St. Ignatius Loyola: text and commentary*, Rome: CIS, 1990, pp. 83-126.
127. DEMOUSTIER, ADRIEN, "La primera anotación de los Ejercicios Espirituales y su contexto histórico" in Plazaola, Juan (ed.), *Las Fuentes de los Ejercicios Espirituales de san Ignacio*, Bilbao: Ediciones Mensajero, (1998) 281 -298.
128. DHÔTEL JEAN-CLAUDE, "L'examen de conscience," in *Christus* 116 (1982) pp. 461-464.
129. DÍAZ BAIZÁN, JESÚS M., "Admiración y agradecimiento en los Ejercicios espirituales de San Ignacio," in *Manresa* 85 (2013) pp. 33-42.
130. DICCIONARIO DE ESPIRITUALIDAD IGNACIANA, 2 vols., (*GEI*), Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 2007.

131. DICTIONNAIRE DE SPIRITUALITÉ: ASCÉTIQUE ET MYSTIQUE, 17 vols. (M. Viller et al), Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1937-1995.
132. DICCIONARIO HISTÓRICO DE LA COMPAÑÍA DE JESÚS, 4 vols., (Charles E. O'Neill-Joaquín M^a Domínguez), Roma/Madrid: IHSI/UPCo, 2001.
133. DIVARKAR, PARMANANDA R., *The Path of Interior knowledge: reflections on the spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1983.
134. DOMÍNGUEZ MORANO, CARLOS, "El 'mucho examinar,' funciones y riesgos," in *Manresa* 62 (1990) pp. 273-288.
135. -----, "Ignacio de Loyola en la luz de Psicoanálisis," in *Proyección* 53 (2006) pp. 25-56.
136. -----, *Psicodinámica de los Ejercicios Ignacianos*, Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 2003.
137. DONNELLY, JOHN PATRICK, "Lallemant, Louis," in *DHCJ* vol. III, pp. 2267-2268.
138. -----, "Rodríguez, Alonso (II)" in *DHCJ* vol. IV, pp. 3394-3395.
139. -----, *Year by Year with the Early Jesuits (1537-1556): Selection from the "Chronicon" of Juan de Polanco, S.J.*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004.
140. DULCOS, PAUL, "Crasset, Jean," in *DHCJ*, vol. II, pp. 992-993.
141. DULLARD, MAURICE, *Hearts Burning Within Us*, Anand, Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2011.
142. DUMINUCO, VINCENT J. (ed.), *The Jesuit 'Ratio Studiorum': 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2000.
143. -----, "A New *Ratio* for a New Millennium?" Duminuco, Vincent J. (ed.), *The Jesuit 'Ratio Studiorum': 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2000, pp. 145-160.
144. DUNNE, TAD, *Spiritual Exercises for today: a contemporary presentation for the classic Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola*, New York: Collins, 1991.
145. DUNNE, THOMAS, "Models of Discernment" in *The Way Supplement* 23 (1974) pp. 18-26.
146. DUPRÉ, LOUIS- SALIERS DON E., *Christian Spirituality III*, New York: SCM Press, 1989.
147. EAGEN, ANTHONY, "Conscience, Spirit, Discernment: The Holy Spirit, the Spiritual Exercises and the Formation of Moral Conscience" in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 138 (2010) pp. 57-70.
148. EASON, MARGARET, "What Does Scripture Tell Us" in *The Way Supplement* 85 (1996) pp. 98 -106.
149. ECHARTE, IGNACIO (ed.), *Concordancia Ignaciana - An Ignatian Concordance*, Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 1996.

150. EGAN, HARVEY DAVID, *The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian Mystical Horizon*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976.
151. -----, *Christian Mysticism: the Future of a Tradition*, New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1984.
152. -----, *Ignatius Loyola The Mystic*, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2001.
153. ELORDUY, ELEUTERIO, “Suárez, Francisco” in *DHCJ* vol. IV, pp. 3654-3656.
154. EMMONS, ROBERT A., “Queen of virtues? Gratitude as a human strength” in *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry*, 32 (2012) 49 – 62.
155. ÉMONET, PIERRE, “Primera semana,” in *DEI*, pp. 1477-1480.
156. ENDEAN, PHILIP, “Origins of Apostolic Formation: Jerome Nadal and Novitiate Experiments” in *The Way Supplement* 39 (1980) pp. 57-82.
157. -----, “Who do you say Ignatius is? Jesuit Fundamentalism and Beyond,” in *Studies in the Spirituality of the Jesuits*, 19 (1987) pp. 1-53.
158. -----, ““The Original Line of Our Father Ignatius” Mercurian and the Spirituality of the Exercises” in McCoog, Thomas M., *The Mercurian Project*, Rome/St. Louis: IHSI/The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004, pp. 35-48.
159. -----, ““The Strange Style of Prayer:” Mercurian, Cordeses, and Alvarez” in McCoog, Thomas M. (ed.), *The Mercurian Project*, Rome/St. Louis: IHSI/ The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004, pp. 351-398.
160. -----, “Discerning Behind the rules: Ignatius’ First letter to Teresa Rejadell,” in *The Way Supplement* 64 (1989) pp. 38-50.
161. ENGLISH, JOHN J., “Mind and Heart of Christ” in *The Way* (1983) pp. 292- 301.
162. -----, *Spiritual Freedom*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 1995.
163. ESCOBAR y MENDOZA, ANTONIO, *Examen, y práctica de confesores, y penitentes: En todas las materias de Teología Moral*, Madrid: Imprenta de María Quiñonesa, 1647.
164. ESPINOSA, CLEMENTE (ed.), *Encuesta internacional sobre los ejercicios espirituales: año 1965*, Roma: 1965 -1966.
165. ----- (ed.), *I Cursus internationalis exercitiorum spiritualium in hodierna luce ecclesiae* vols. I, II, Roma: CIS, 1968.
166. EZPELETA, MÁXIMO, “El diario espiritual de San Francisco de Borja,” in *Manresa* 35 (1963) pp. 121-132.
167. FAESEN, ROB, “The Great Silence of Saint Joseph: Devotion to Saint Joseph and the 17th Century Crisis of Mysticism in the Jesuit Order,” in Laugerud, Henning/ Skinnebach, Laura Katrine (eds.), *Instruments of Devotion*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2007, pp. 73-92.

168. -----, "The Seventeenth Century Crisis of Mysticism in the Society of Jesus: The Analysis of Jean-Joseph Surin S.J. (1600-1665)," in *Bijdragen*, 71/3 (2010) pp. 268-288.
169. -----, "Achille Gagliardi and the Northern Mystics," in Robert A. Maryks (ed.), *A Companion to Jesuit Mysticism*, Leiden: Brill, 2017, pp. 82-111.
170. FERNÁNDEZ MARTÍN, LUIS, *Los años juveniles de Iñigo de Loyola: su formación en Castilla*, Valladolid: Caja de Ahorros Popular, 1981.
171. FIORITO, MIGUEL ÁNGEL, "La ley ignaciana de la oración," in *Stromata XXIII* (1967) pp. 3-89.
172. -----, "Ignatius' own legislation on Prayer," in *Woodstock Letters*, vol. 97/2 (1968), pp. 149-224.
173. -----, *Discernimiento y lucha espiritual*, Buenos Aires: Ediciones Diego de Torres, 1985.
174. -----, *Buscar y Hallar la Voluntad de Dios*, Paulinas, Buenos Aires, 2000.
175. FISHER, ARTHUR L., "A Study in Early Jesuit Government: The Nature and Origins of the Dissent of Nicolás Bobadilla," in *Viator* 10 (1979) pp. 397-431.
176. FLEMING, DAVID L., *Notes on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985.
177. -----, *Draw Me into Your Friendship*, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996.
178. -----, "Reino," in *DEI*, pp. 1562-1565.
179. FLIPO, CLAUDE, *Velad y orad* (trans. Alfonso Ortíz García), Santander: Sal Terrae, 1994.
180. FOIS, MARIO, "Everard Mercurian," in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1611-1614.
181. -----, "Aquaviva, Claudio," in *DHCJ*, vol. II, pp. 1614-1621.
182. -----, "Vitelleschi, Mucio," in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1621-1627.
183. FOLEY, HENRY, *The Life of Blessed Alphonsus Rodriguez, Lay Brother of the Society of Jesus*, London: Burns & Oates, 1873.
184. FUTRELL, JOHN CARROLL, "Ignatian Discernment," in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 2 (1970) pp. 47-88.
185. -----, *El Discernimiento Espiritual*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 1984.
186. GALLAGHER, TIMOTHY M., *The Discernment of Spirits*, New York: Crossroad, 2005.
187. -----, *The Examen Prayer*, New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2006.
188. GANSS, GEORGE E., "The Authentic Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Some Facts of History and Terminology Basic to Their Functional Efficacy Today," in *Studies in the Spirituality of the Jesuits*, 1 (1969) pp. 1-36.
189. GARCÍA BONASA, MANUEL, "Comunidad de memoria: cuatro textos autobiográficos," in *Manresa* 85 (2013), pp. 43-56.

190. GARCÍA DE CASTRO VALDÉS, JOSÉ, *El Dios emergente: sobre la consolación sin causa (EE 330)*, Bilbao/ Santander: Mensajero/ Sal Terrae, 2001.
191. -----, "Semántica y mística: el Diario espiritual de Ignacio de Loyola," in *Miscelánea Comillas* 59 (2001) pp. 211-254.
192. -----, "¿Qué hacemos cuando hacemos Ejercicios? Actividad del ejercitante a través de sus verbos," in *Manresa* 74 (2002) pp. 11-40.
193. -----, "Claudio Jayo (Vulliet ca. 1504-Viena 1552): compañero, teólogo, apóstol," in *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 80/314 (2005) pp. 485-542.
194. -----, *Pedro Fabro, La Cuarta Dimensión: orar y vivir*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 2006.
195. -----, *Polanco: El humanismo de los jesuitas*, Bilbao, 2007.
196. -----, "Cartas" in *DEI*, pp. 301-302.
197. -----, "Consolación sin causa precedente," in *DEI*, pp. 425-428.
198. -----, "Ejercitante," in *DEI*, pp. 715-721.
199. -----, "La estructura interna del discernimiento," in *Manresa* 80/315 (2008) pp. 125-140.
200. -----, "Alcanzados por las fuentes: ¿Por qué? ¿Cómo?" in *Manresa* 81 (2009) pp. 311-328.
201. -----, "Companionship in the Spirit. A History of the Spirituality of the Society of Jesus," in *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 91/356 (2016) pp. 87-141.
202. GARCÍA DOMÍNGUEZ, LUIS MARÍA, "Gli "affetti diordinati" nell'Antropologia Ignaziana" in Imoda, Franco (ed.), *Antropologia Interdisciplinare e Formazione*, Bologna: EDB, 1997.
203. -----, "Desolación, depresión y tristeza ambivalente," in *Manresa* 75 (2003) pp. 359-376.
204. -----, "Afección desordenada," in *DEI*, pp. 91-95.
205. -----, *Las Afecciones Desordenadas: Influjo del subconsciente en la vida espiritual* (2ª ed.), Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero-Sal Terrae, 2015.
206. GARCÍA HIRSCHFELD, CARLOS., "Todo modo de examinar la consciencia," in *Manresa* 62/3 (1990) pp. 251-271.
207. GARCÍA MATEO, ROGELIO, "La formación castellana de Ignacio de Loyola y su espiritualidad," in *Manresa* 58 (1986) pp. 375-383.
208. GARCÍA, JOSÉ A., "Confía en Dios como si todo dependiera de ti..." in *Manresa* 82 (2010) pp. 277-284.
209. GARCIA, LAUTICO, *El hombre Según san Ignacio*, Madrid: Razon y Fe, 1961
210. GARCÍA-VILLOSLADA, RICARDO, *Loyola y Erasmo: dos almas, dos épocas*, Madrid: Taurus, 1965.
211. -----, *San Ignacio de Loyola: nueva biografía*, Madrid: La Editorial Católica, 1986.

212. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, REGINALD, *The Three Ages of Interior Life*, 2 vols., St. Louis: Herder Books, 1948.
213. GEI (ed.), *Escritos esenciales de los primeros jesuitas*, Madrid/Santander/Bilbao: UPCo /Sal Terrae/Mensajero, 2017.
214. GERVAIS, PIERRE, “Segunda semana,” in *DEI*, pp. 1624-1631.
215. GIL, DANIEL, *La consolación sin causa precedente: estudio hermenéutico-teológico sobre los nn. 330, 331 y 336 de los ‘Ejercicios’, y sus principales comentaristas*, Montevideo, 1971.
216. -----, “Gagliardi y sus comentarios a los Ejercicios,” in *Manresa* 44 (1972) pp. 273-284.
217. -----, “Gagliardi y los Ejercicios Ignacianos,” in *Manresa* 44 (1972) pp. 379-400.
218. -----, *Discernimiento según san Ignacio* (2ª ed.), Roma: CIS, 1983.
219. GILL, JAMES J., “A Jesuit’s Account of Conscience - for Personal and Organizational Effectiveness,” in *Studies in the Spirituality of the Jesuits* 9 (1977) pp. 247-276.
220. GIOIA, MARIO, *Breve Compendio di perfezione cristiana: un testo di Achille Gagliardi S.I.*, Roma/Brescia: Gregorian University Press/Morcelliana, 1996.
221. GIULIANI, M., “Les Motions de Esprits,” in *Christus* (1954) pp. 64-76.
222. GOLDIE, FRANCIS, *The Life of St. Alonso Rodriguez*, London: Burns & Oates, 1889.
223. GONGALVES DA CAMARA, LUIS, *Remembering Inigo: Glimpses of the Life of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, The Memoriale of Luis Gongalves da Camara*, St Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004.
224. GONZÁLEZ BUELTA, BENJAMÍN, “Mística en la cultura de la seducción. Aplicar los cinco sentidos a la realidad,” in *Manresa* 85 (2013) pp. 57-68.
225. GONZÁLEZ HERNÁNDEZ, LUIS, “Examen de Conciencia y discernimiento” in *Manresa* 62 (1990) pp. 289-305.
226. GONZÁLEZ MAGAÑA, EMILIO, “Ejercicios espirituales a jóvenes. Indicaciones de los Directorios y praxis de los primeros compañeros,” in Xavier Quinza Lleo/ José J. Alemany (Eds.), *Ciudad de los hombres, ciudad de Dios: Homenaje a Alfonso Álvarez Bolado*, Madrid: UPCo, 1999, pp. 621-672.
227. -----, *El “Taller de Conversión” de los Ejercicios*, Tomo I, México: Universidad Iberoamericana, 2002.
228. -----, “Las anotaciones de los Ejercicios Espirituales,” in *Ignaziana* 21 (2016) pp. 3-22.
229. GONZÁLEZ MODROÑO, ISIDRO, “El que los recibe (el sujeto. Disposiciones),” in *Manresa* 61 (1989), pp. 325-336.
230. GONZÁLEZ, LUIS, “Examen de conciencia y discernimiento,” in *Manresa* 62 (1990) pp. 289-306.

231. GÖRRES, ALBERT, *Methode und Erfahrungen der Psychoanalyse*, Munich, Kindler, 1965.
232. -----, *Métodos y experiencias del psicoanálisis* (trans. Alejandro Ros), Barcelona: Herder, 1968.
233. GOUET, P. “Oración de Alianza o como proponer el examen” in *Cuaderno 74* (1992) 49-54.
234. GOULDING, GILL K., “The Cardoner Imperative,” in *The Way* 47/1-2 (2008) pp. 243-259.
235. GRAMATOWSKI, WIKTOR, “Ledóchowski, Włodimiro,” in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1687-1688.
236. GRANERO, JESÚS M., *San Ignacio de Loyola: la misión de su vida*, Madrid: Razón y Fe, 1984.
237. -----, *San Ignacio de Loyola: Panoramas de su Vida*, Madrid: Razón y Fe, 1967.
238. GREEN, THOMAS, *Weeds Among the Wheat. Discernment: where Prayer and Action Meet*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1984.
239. GROGAN, BRIAN, *Alone and on Foot*, Dublin: Veritas, 2008.
240. GUERRERO ALVES, JUAN ANTONIO, “La práctica del discernimiento espiritual en la carta de Ignacio de Loyola a Teresa Rejadell del 18 de junio de 1536,” in *Manresa* 73 (2001) pp. 187-210.
241. GUIBERT, JOSÉ MARÍA, *Diccionario de Liderazgo Ignaciano*, Bilbao: Mensajero, 2014.
242. GUIBERT, JOSEPH DE, *The Theology of the Spiritual Life*, London: Sheed & Ward, 1954.
243. -----, *The Jesuits and Their Spiritual Doctrine: A Historical Study* (trans. William J. Young; ed. George E. Ganss), St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1986.
244. GUIDETTI, ARMANDO, “Scaramelli, Giovanni Battista,” in *DHCJ* vol. IV, p. 3512.
245. GUILLÉN, ANTONIO T., “El proceso espiritual de la Cuarta Semana,” in *Manresa* 79 (2007) pp. 127-138.
246. -----, “La repetición y el resumen,” in *Manresa* 81 (2009) pp. 167-173.
247. -----, “La originalidad ignaciana de la Tercera Semana,” in *Manresa* 83 (2011) pp. 339-350.
248. HEALY THOMPSON, EDWARD (ed.), *The Life of St. Stanislas Kostka, of the Society of Jesus*, London: Burns & Oates, 1881.
249. HINZ, MANFRED – ROBERTO RIGHI – DANILO ZARDIN (ed.), *I Gesuiti e la Ratio Studiorum*, Roma: Bulzoni Editore, 2004.
250. HOGUE, LEO A., “The Direttorio Mistico of J. B. Scaramelli S.I.,” in *AHSI* 9 (1940) pp. 1-39.
251. HORN, JOHN, *Mystical Healing: The Psychological and Spiritual Power of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises*, New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996.
252. HUGHES, GERARD, “Ignatian Discernment,” *The Heythrop Journal* 31 (1990) pp. 419-438.

253. IGLESIAS, IGNACIO, “Influjo de los Ejercicios Espirituales en la pedagogía ignaciana,” in *Manresa* 83 (2011) pp. 273-286.
254. IMODA, FRANCO (ed.), *Antropologia Interdisciplinare e Formazione*, Bologna: EDB, 1997.
255. -----, *A Journey to Freedom*, Leuven: Peeters, 2000.
256. *Instructiones ad provinciales et superiors Societatis*, Antwerp, 1635.
257. IPARRAGUIRRE, IGNACIO, “Lettere Luigi Gonzaga a madre,” in *AHSI* 15-16 (1946-1948) pp. 160-163.
258. -----, *Historia de los Ejercicios de san Ignacio*, Bilbao/Roma: Mensajero/IHSI, 1946.
259. -----, *Practica de los ejercicios de San Ignacio de Loyola en vida de su autor (1522 – 1556)*, Bilbao/Roma: Mensajero/IHSI, 1946.
260. -----, “Para la historia de la oración en el Colegio Romano durante la segunda mitad del siglo XVI,” in *AHSI*, XV (1946) pp. 77 -126.
261. -----, *Introduzione allo Studio degli Esercizi*, Roma: PUG, 1951.
262. -----, “El venerable P. Luis de la Puente maestro de oracion,” in *Manresa* 26 (1954) pp. 227-252.
263. -----, “La oración en la Compañía Naciente”, *AHSI* 25 (1956) pp. 455 - 487.
264. -----, *Comentarios de los Ejercicios Ignacianos: (siglos XVI-XVIII) reportorio critico*, Roma: IHSI, 1967.
265. -----, “Desmitificación de san Ignacio,” in *AHSI*, 41 (1972) pp. 357-373.
266. -----, “Gagliardi,” in *DSp*. VI, pp. 53-64.
267. -----, *Espíritu de San Ignacio de Loyola: perspectivas y actitudes ignacianas de espiritualidad*, Bilbao: Mensajero, 1958.
268. -----, *The Ever Youthful and Dynamic Character of Ignatian Spirituality*, 1974.
269. -----, *Vocabulario de Ejercicios Espirituales*, Roma: CIS, 1978.
270. -----, *Vocabulario de Ejercicios Espirituales: Ensayo de Hermenéutica Ignaciana*, Roma: CIS, 1978.
271. IVENS, MICHAEL, “The Eighteenth Annotation and the Early Directories,” in *The Way Supplement* 46 (1993) pp. 3-10,
272. -----, *Keeping in Touch: Posthumous Papers on Ignatian Topics*, Joseph A. Munitiz (ed.), Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2007.
273. -----, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2008.
274. JAEGER, HASSO, et al, “Examen de Conscience” in *DSp*. vol. IV, pp. 1789-1838.
275. JANSEN, GARY, *The 15-Minute Prayer Solution*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 2010.

276. JEAN-PIERRE LAFOUGE (ed.), *For God's Greater Glory: Gems of Jesuit Spirituality from Louis Lallemant, Jean-Pierre de Caussade, and Claude de la Colombière*, Indiana: World Wisdom, 2006.
277. JESSEDU, "Congreso internacional de los delegados de educación de la Compañía de Jesús – Acuerdos finales," Río de Janeiro, 2017.
278. JIMÉNEZ OÑATE, ANTONIO, *El Origen de la Compañía de Jesús: Carisma Fundacional y Génesis Histórica*, Roma: IHSI, 1966.
279. JOSEPH, JOHN, "Evolution of a Discerning Heart in Ignatius as seen in the Autobiography," in *Ignis* XLII no. I (2012) pp. 5- 46.
280. KARRER, OTTO, "Borgia's Influence on the Development of Prayer-life in the Society of Jesus," in *Woodstock Letters* 96 (1967) pp. 340-364.
281. KINERK, E. EDWARD, "When Jesuits Pray: a perspective on the prayer of Apostolic Persons" in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 17/5 (1985) pp. 1-49.
282. KOLVENBACH, PETER-HANS, *La formación del Jesuita*, Roma, 2003.
283. -----, *Selección de escritos del P. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach 1991-2007*, Roma, 2007.
284. LACHLAN M. HUGHES., "Affectivity, Conscience and Christian Choice" in *Way Supplement* 24 (1975) pp. 36-45.
285. LAMARTHEE ESTRADE, PABLO, "Los tres grados de la vida espiritual y el conocimiento interno de los ejercicios ignacianos," in *Estudios Eclesiásticos* vol. 91, n. 356 (2016) pp. 29-58.
286. LAMBERT, WILLI, *Vocabulario de Espiritualidad Ignaciana* (trans. Manuel Reus), Bilbao: Mensajero, 2006.
287. LAMET, PEDRO MIGUEL, *Diego Laínez, SJ: Sucesor de San Ignacio*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 2012.
288. LAPLACE, JEAN, *An Experience of Life in the Spirit – Ten Days in the Tradition of the Spiritual Exercises*, The Anchor Press Ltd, London, 1997.
289. LASKY, COLLEEN MARIE, *The Evening Examen Prayer: A Spiritual Journal Inspired by St. Ignatius of Loyola's Examen Journal*, Ohio: Dentelle Publishers, 2013.
290. LEBRET, LOUIS-JOSEPH, *Examen de conciencia para nuestro tiempo*, Barcelona: Estela, 1963.
291. LECRIVAIN, PHILIPPE, "Trois superieurs generaux," in *Christus* 174 (2008) pp. 104-111.
292. LEDÓCHOWSKI, WLODIMIR, *La voz de N.P. Ledóchowski, colección sistematizada de las principales cartas y documentos del M.R.P. Wlodimiro Ledóchowski, XXVI General de la*

- Compañía de Jesús*, (edición arreglada por Arturo M. Cayuela), Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1945.
293. LETURIA, PEDRO DE, “Génesis de los ejercicios de S. Ignacio y su influjo en la fundación de la Compañía de Jesús (1521-1540),” in *AHSI* 10 (1941) pp. 16-59.
294. -----, “La hora matutina de meditación en la compañía de Jesús [1540-1590],” in *Estudio ignacianos*, Roma: BIHSI, pp. 189-268.
295. -----, *El Gentilhombre Iñigo López de Loyola en su patria y en su siglo* (segunda edición coregida), Barcelona: Labor, 1949.
296. -----, *Génesis de los Ejercicios de san Ignacio y su influjo en la fundación de la compañía de Jesús (1521 – 1540) Estudios Ignacianos II*, Roma: IHSI, 1957.
297. -----, “Lecturas Ascéticas y Lecturas Místicas entre los Jesuitas del siglo XVI,” in *Estudios Ignacianos II*, Roma: BIHSI (1957) pp. 269-331.
298. -----, *Iñigo de Loyola* (trans. by Aloysius J. Owen), Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1965.
299. -----, *Ignacio de Loyola en Castilla: juventud, formación, espiritualidad*, Valladolid: Caja de Ahorros, 1989.
300. LEWIS, MARK, “The First Jesuits as Reformed Priests,” *AHSI* 65 (1996) pp. 111-127.
301. LINDEIJER, MARC, “Bibliografía sul Beato Pierre Favre,” in *Ignaziana* (2005) 1-11.
302. LIPPERT, PETER, *The Jesuits, a Self-Portrait* (trans. John Murray), New York: Herder and Herder, 1958.
303. LONSDALE, DAVID, “Contemplation in Everyday Life” in *The Way* 59 (1987) pp. 77-87.
304. -----, “The Serpent’s Tail: Rules for Discernment,” in Philip Sheldrake (ed.), *The Way of Ignatius Loyola*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991, pp. 165-175.
305. -----, *Dance to the Music of the Spirit: the Art of Discernment*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1992.
306. LÓPEZ AZPITARTE, EDUARDO, *La oración contemplativa: evolución y sentido en Álvarez de Paz*, Granada: Facultad de Teología, 1966.
307. LÓPEZ GUZMÁN, M^a DOLORES, “Lo que más conduce,” in *Manresa* 82 (2010) pp. 261-266.
308. LÓPEZ-GAY, JESÚS, “Javier, Francisco,” in *DHCJ* vol. III, pp. 2140-2141.
309. LOUW, DANIEL J., *A Mature Faith: Spiritual Direction and Anthropology in a Theology of Pastoral Care and Counselling*, Louvain: Peeters Press, 1999.
310. MACKE, PAUL B., “Boundaries Revisited,” in *Human Development* 27 (2006) pp. 46-48.
311. MADRIGAL, SANTIAGO, “El compromiso ecuménico de la iglesia Católica,” in *Sal Terrae* 87 (1999) pp. 789-802.

312. -----, "Reglas de sentir la Iglesia," in *DEI*, pp. 1555-1561.
313. MANNEY, JIM, *The Prayer that Changes Everything*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 2011.
314. MANNOOR, SOMY, *Understanding the Examen: the Examen as a Daily Discernment*, Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2014.
315. MANTILLA, SEBASTIAN, "La Doctrina del Examen General sobre los pecados de pensamieto," in *Manresa* 9 (1933) pp. 244 -257.
316. MARCHETTI, OTTAVIO, "Un'opera inedita su di una mistica del 700 attribuita al P. Scaramelli S.I.," in *AHSI* 2 (1933) pp. 230-257.
317. MARSH, ROBERT R., "Looking at God Looking at you: Ignatius' Third Addition," *The Way* 43 (2004) pp. 19 -28.
318. MARTIN, JAMES, *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life*, New York: Harper Collins, 2010.
319. MARTÍNEZ DE LA ESCALERA, JOSÉ, "Congregaciones," in *DEI* pp. 397-399.
320. MARTINI, CARLO M., "Biblia y Ejercicios," in *DEI*, pp. 228-229.
321. MARTY, FRANCOIS, "L'examen, priere de l'apotre," in *Christus* 20 (1958) pp. 494-511.
322. MARYKS, ROBERT A., "La Consolatio nel minister della Confessione dei primi Gesuiti," in Hinz, Manfred – Roberto Righi – Danilo Zardin (a cura di), *I Gesuiti e la Ratio Studiorum*, Roma: Bulzoni Editore, 2004, pp. 211-227.
323. ----- (ed.), *A Companion to Jesuit Mysticism*, Boston: Brill, 2017.
324. MASÍA CLAVEL, JUAN, *Respirar y caminar: ejercicios espirituales en reposo*, Bilbao: Desclée de Brouwer, 2001.
325. MCCOOG, THOMAS M. (ed.), *The Mercurian Project, Forming Jesuit Culture*, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2004.
326. ----- (ed.), *Ite Inflamate Omnia: Selected Historical Papers from Conferences Held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, Rome: IHSI, 2010.
327. -----, "And Touching Our Society": *Fashioning Jesuit Identity in Elizabethan England*, London: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2013.
328. MCGRATH, ALISTER, *Christian Spirituality*, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, 1999.
329. MCMAHON, ELLA (ed./trans.), *The Secret of Sanctity According to St. Francis de Sales and Father Crasset*, New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1892.
330. MEDINA, FRANCISCO DE BORJA, "Vivencia de Inigo López de Loyola en la corte del Rey Católico y su reflejo en los Ejercicios," in Plazaola, Juan (ed.), *Las fuentes de los Ejercicios Espirituales de san Ignacio: actas del Simposio Internacional (Loyola, 15-19 septiembre 1997)*, Bilbao: Mensajero, 1998, pp. 399-420.

331. -----, "Inigo de Loyola y los mercaderes castellanos del norte de Europa. La financiación de sus estudios en la Universidad de Paris," in *Hispania Sacra* 51 (1999) pp. 159-206.
332. -----, "Nota sobre los binarios [EE 149]" in Plazaola, Juan (ed.), *Las fuentes de los Ejercicios Espirituales de san Ignacio: actas del Simposio Internacional (Loyola, 15-19 septiembre 1997)*, Bilbao: Mensajero, 1998, pp. 423-428.
333. MEGYER, EUGENE, "Theological Trends: Spiritual Theology Today," in *The Way* 21 (1981) pp. 55-67.
334. MELLONI, JAVIER, *Los ejercicios espirituales: un eslabón en la tradición de occidente*, Barcelona: Cristianisme i Justicia, 1998.
335. -----, *La Mistagogia de los Ejercicios*, Bilbao/Santander: Mensajero/Sal Terrae, 2001.
336. -----, *The Exercises of Ignatius in the Western Tradition*, London: Gracewing, 2000.
337. -----, "Los Ejercicios como experiencia mística," in *Manresa* 76 (2004) pp. 355 -369.
338. ----- (ed.), *Compendio breve de Ejercicio Espirituales*, Madrid: BAC, 2006.
339. -----, "Cardoner," in *DEI*, pp. 279-286.
340. MERCECA, EDWARD, "Discernimiento comunitario," in *DEI*, pp. 611-615.
341. MIRANDA ALISTE, VICENTE, *La conciencia, criterio decisivo de la moralidad*, Madrid: Cátedra de Teología contemporánea, 1991.
342. MOLINA, DIEGO M., "Dos épocas para una experiencia: la mística ignaciana en el siglo XVI y en el siglo XX," in *Manresa* 77 (2005) pp. 343-361.
343. MOLLÁ LLÁCER, DARÍO, "Contemplativos en la acción: espiritualidad ignaciana," in *Teología Espiritual* 60 (2016) pp. 197-209.
344. MOONS, JOS, "Remembering as a Crucial Spiritual Tool," in *The Way* 55/2 (2016) pp. 71-81.
345. MORA, ALFONSO DE LA, *La devoción en el espíritu de San Ignacio*, Roma: CIS, 1982.
346. MOSTACCIO, SILVIA, *Early Modern Jesuits Between Obedience and Conscience during the Generalate of Claudio Acquaviva (1581-1615)*, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014.
347. MUCCI, GIANDOMENICO, "Lallemant e de Caussade nella spiritualità della Compagnia di Gesù," in *La Civiltà Cattolica* 141/2 (1990) pp. 568-572.
348. -----, "Gagliardi, Achille," in *DHCJ* vol. II, p. 1547-1548.
349. -----, "Jean-Pierre de Caussade: Autenticità critica e valore di una spiritualità," in *La Civiltà Cattolica* 156/3 (2005) pp. 32-40.
350. MUKIAY, CRISPIN, "Luis Lallemant, maestro y místico de la interioridad y unión con Dios," in *Manresa* 85 (2013) pp. 79-91.
351. MULDOON, TIM., *The Ignatian Workout*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 2005.

352. MUNITIZ, JOSEPH A., "The Spiritual Diary of Ignatius Loyola," in *The Way Supplement* 16 (1972) pp. 101-116.
353. ----- (ed./trans.), *Ignatian Spirituality: A Selection of Continental Studies in Translation*, Oxford: Way Books, 2016.
354. ----- (ed./trans.), *Inigo: Letters Personal and Spiritual*, Hurstpierpoint: Inigo Enterprises, 1995.
355. -----, "How did Inigo Learn to Pray," in Munitiz, Joseph A. (Ed. & Trns.), *Ignatian Spirituality: A Selection of Continental Studies in Translation*, Oxford: Way Books, 2016, pp. 1-25.
356. MUNOZ, HECTOR, *Will You Hear My Confession? How to Make a Good Examination of Conscience and a Good Confession* (trans. of Robert R. Barr), New York: Alba house, 1982.
357. MUNTANÉ, ALFREDO, "In memoriam," *Manresa* 37 (1965) 99-112.
358. MURPHY, EDMOND C., et al. (eds.), *The Spiritual Writings of Pierre Favre*, Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1999.
359. NADAL CAÑELLAS, JUAN, *Jerónimo Nadal: vida e influjo*, Santander: sal Terrae, 2007.
360. NADAL, JERÓNIMO, "Apología de la Compañía de Jesús contra la censura de la facultad de teología de Paris (1557)" (trans. Miguel Lop Sebastiá), in *Ignaziana* 2008, pp. 1-45.
361. NELSON, RICHARD L., *Following the Way through Lent: using the Examen method for daily prayer and self-reflection*, 2017
362. NEULINGER, THOMAS, "Renewing the Original Zeal: comments and Observations on the Spiritual Writings of Claudio Acquaviva, S.J." in McCoog, Thomas, (ed.), *Ite Inflamete Omnia: Selected Historical Papers from Conferences Held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, Rome: IHSI, 2010. pp. 149-158.
363. NICOLÁS, ADOLFO, *Directrices espirituales de San Ignacio en sus cartas a los nuestros*, Alcalá de Henares, 1960.
364. NICOLAU, MIGUEL (ed.), *Platicas espirituales del P. Jerónimo Nadal, S.I., en Coimbra (1561)*, Granada, 1945.
365. -----, "Espiritualidad de la Compañía de Jesús en la España del siglo XVI," in AA.VV., *Corrientes espirituales en la España del siglo XVI*, Barcelona: Juan Flors, 1963, pp. 341-361.
366. -----, "La oración de san Ignacio: fórmulas que la expresan," in *Manresa* 28 (1956) pp. 91-104.
367. -----, "Un autor desconocido en la historia de la meditación: Jerónimo Nadal (1507-1580)," in *Revista española de Teología* 2 (1942) pp. 101-159.

368. -----, *Jerónimo Nadal S.I. (1507 - 1580): sus obras y doctrinas espirituales*, Madrid: CSIC, 1949.
369. NIEREMBERG, JUAN EUSEBIO, *Varones ilustres de la Compañía de Jesús*, vols. I-IX, Bilbao: Mensajero del Corazón de Jesús, 1887-1892.
370. NONELL, JAIME (ed.), *Obras espirituales del Beato Alonso Rodríguez*, 3 vols., Barcelona, 1885-1887.
371. -----, *El P. José Pignatelli y la Compañía de Jesús en su extinción y restablecimiento* 3 vols., Manresa: Imprenta de San José, 1893-1894.
372. NORTH, ROBERT G, *The General Who Rebuilt the Jesuits*, Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1944.
373. O'BRIEN, TIMOTHY W., "'Con Ojos Interiores': Ignatius of Loyola and the Spiritual Senses," in *Studies in Spirituality* 26 (2016) pp. 263-281.
374. O'MALLEY, JOHN W., *The First Jesuits*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.
375. -----, *Saints or Devils Incarnate? Studies in Jesuit History*, Boston: Brill, 2013.
376. O'MALLEY, JOHN, ET.AL., *Jesuit Spirituality: A Now and Future Resource*, Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1990.
377. O'NEILL, CHARLES E., "Acatamiento: Ignatian Reverence in History and in contemporary Culture", *Studies in the Spirituality of the Jesuits* 8 (1976) pp. 1-41.
378. O'REILLY, TERENCE, *From Ignatius to John of the Cross*, Surrey: Variorum, 1995.
379. -----, "Temor," in *DEI*, pp. 1676-1680.
380. -----, "The Spiritual Exercise and Illuminism in Spain: Dominican Critics of the Early Society of Jesus," in McCoog, Thomas, (ed.), *Ite Inflamate Omnia: Selected Historical Papers from Conferences Held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, Rome: IHSI, 2010, pp. 199-228.
381. OBERHOLZER, PAUL (ed.), *Diego Laínez (1512 -1565) and his Generalate*, Roma: IHSI, 2015.
382. OLPHE-GALLIARD, MICHEL, "Crasset," in *DSp*. vol. II/2, p. 2518.
383. -----, "Caussade, Jean-Pierre de," in *DHCJ* vol. I, p. 723.
384. -----, "Surin, Jean-Joseph," in *DHCJ* vol. IV, pp. 3671-3673.
385. ORAÁ, ANTONINO, *Ejercicios espirituales de San Ignacio de Loyola: explicación de las meditaciones y documentos en ellos contenidos*, 6ª ed., Madrid: Razón y Fe, 1960.
386. ORLANDIS, RAMÓN, "El doble discernimiento en los intérpretes antiguos de los Ejercicios" in *Manresa* 11 (1935) pp. 3-30.

387. -----, "Lo que quieres, lo que desea, lo que busca el ejercitante," in *Manresa* 10 (1934) pp. 289-317.
388. PABEL, HILMAR M., "Fear and Consolation: Peter Canisius and the Spirituality of Dying and Death," in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 45/1 (2013) pp. 1-32.
389. PADBERG, JOHN W. – LUCAS, THOMAS M. (eds.), *Spirit, Style, Story: Essays Honoring John W. Padberg, S.J.*, Chicago: Jesuit Way, 2003.
390. PADBERG, JOHN W., "Development of the *Ratio Studiorum*," in Duminuco, Vincent J. (ed.), *The Jesuit 'Ratio Studiorum': 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, New York: Fordham University Press, 2000, pp. 79-100.
391. -----, "The Three Forgotten Founders of the Society of Jesus", *Studies in the Spirituality of the Jesuits*, 29/2 (1997) pp. 1-45.
392. -----, "The General Congregations of the Society of Jesus, A brief Survey of their History," in *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, vol. VI (1974) 1-125.
393. PALAGIANO, SERGIO, "Il fondo archivistico "P. Jan Philip Roothaan SJ" nell'Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu: riordinamento, inventariazione e digitalizzazione," in *AHSI* 83/166 (2014) pp. 571-578.
394. PALMER, MARTIN E., *On Giving the Spiritual Exercises: the Early Jesuit Manuscript Directories and the Official Directory of 1599*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996.
395. PARTOES, FRANÇOIS, "¿Por dónde pasa mi Señor? Valor contemplativo del examen," trans. Guido Jonquieres, S.J., in *Cuadernos de Espiritualidad* 74 (July-August) 1992, pp. 3-47.
396. PASQUIER, JACQUES, "Examination of Conscience and *Revision de vie*," in *The Way* 11 (1971) pp. 305-312.
397. PAVULRAJ, MICHAEL, "The Inner Dynamics of the Ignatian Key Meditations – A Way to Search and Find the Will of God," in *Ignis*, 2012.1 vol XLII no. I, pp. 47- 69.
398. PECKLERS, KEITH F., "Liturgia," in *DEI*, pp. 1134-1139.
399. PEDRO CANISIO, *S. Pedro Canisio de la Compañía de Jesús, Confesor y doctor de la Iglesia*, Sevilla: Mejías y Susillo, 1925.
400. PEETERS, LOUIS, *Vers l'union divine par les exercices de S. Ignace*, Louven: Museum Lessianum, 1931.
401. -----, *Hacia la unión con Dios: por medio de los Ejercicios de S. Ignacio*, Bilbao: El Mensajero del Corazón de Jesús, 1944.
402. PENNING DE VRIES, PIET, *Ignatius of de Spiritualiteit de Jezüeten, Lannoo, Tielt – La Haya – Holland, 1964.*

403. PETERS, WILLEM A. M., "Richard Whitford and St. Ignatius' Visit to England" in *AHSI*, XXVI, (1957) pp. 328-350.
404. -----, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius – Exposition and Interpretation*, Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis, Rome, 1980.
405. PIRRI PEDRO, *El. P. Juan Roothaan, XXI General de la Compañía de Jesús*, Bilbao: El Mensajero de Corazón de Jesús, 1934.
406. PIRRI, PIETRO, "Il P. Achille Gagliardi, la Dama Milanese la riforma dello spirito e il movimento degli zelato," in *AHSI* 14 (1945) pp. 1-72.
407. -----, "Il 'Breve compendio' di Achille Gagliardi al vaglio di teologi gesuiti," in *AHSI* (1951) 231-253.
408. -----, "Gagliardiana," in *AHSI* 29 (1960) pp. 99-106.
409. PUIGGRÓS, LUIS, "Vía unitiva en los ejercicios según el P. Luis de la Palma," in *Manresa* 1 (1926) pp. 3-20.
410. PURCELL, MARY, *The Quiet Companion*, Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1970.
411. QUERALT, ANTONIO, "Lo Spirito Santo nella Spiritualità di Sant' Ignazio" in Barlone, Sandro (ed.) *Ignazio di Loyola, un mistico in Azione*, Città Nuova, Roma (1994) pp. 197-237.
412. QUIJANO, AVELINO, "Tres tipos de ejercicios ignacianos: Ejercicios de iniciación, de profundización y completos, in *Manresa* 85 (2013) pp. 223-235.
413. QUINZÁ LLEÓ, XAVIER – ALEMANY, JOSÉ J., (eds.), *Ciudad de los hombres, ciudad de Dios: homenaje a Alfonso Álvarez Bolado*, Madrid: UPCo, 1999.
414. RADVAN, IAIN, "Spiritual Direction, Experiential Focusing and the Examen of St. Ignatius," in *The Way* 57 (2018) pp. 101-110.
415. RAHNER, HUGO, *The Spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola: An Account of its Historical Development* (trans. Francis J. Smith), Westminster, 1953.
416. -----, *Ignacio de Loyola y su historia formación espiritual*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 1955.
417. -----, *Notes on the Spiritual Exercises*, Woodstock College Press, New Jersey, 1956.
418. -----, *Genesis y teología del libro de los ejercicios*, Madrid: Apostolado de la prensa, 1966.
419. -----, *Ignatius the Theologian* (trans. Michael Barry), London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1990.
420. -----, *Come Sono Nati gli Esercizi*, Milano: ADP, 2004.
421. RAHNER, KARL, *The Dynamic Element in the Church*, New York: Herder and Herder, 1964.
422. RAMBLA, JOSEP M., "José Calveras, S.J., hombre de los Ejercicios espirituales," in *Manresa* 85/3 (2013) pp. 291-310.
423. RAMIERE, HENRICO (ed.) *Compendium Instituti Societatis Jesu*, 1896.

424. RAVIER, ANDRÉ, *Ignacio de Loyola fundador de la Compañía de Jesús*, (prologo y epilogo: Juan Plazaola, trans. By Maria Aurrecoechea), Madrid: Espasa, 1991.
425. -----, *Ignatius of Loyola and the Founding of the Society of Jesus*, (Trans. By Maura Daly, Joan Daly & Carson Daly), San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987.
426. REHG, WILLIAM., “Christian Mindfulness: A Path to Finding God in all Things,” St. Louis: *Studies in Spirituality of the Jesuits*, 34/3 (2002) pp. 1-27.
427. REVUELTA GONZÁLEZ, MANUEL, *El hombre en los Ejercicios de San Ignacio*, Madrid 1968.
428. -----, *Once calas en la Historia de la Compañía de Jesús: servir a todos en el Señor*, Madrid: UPCo, 2006.
429. -----, Historiografía de la Compañía de Jesús restaurada en España (1815-2017), in *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 92/361 (2017) pp. 301-326.
430. RICH, ANTONY D., *Discernment in the Church Fathers*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007.
431. RIERA, FRANCESCO, “Ejercicios en la vida corriente,” in *DEI*, pp. 703-708.
432. RIVAS REBAQUE, Fernando, *La experiencia espiritual de Jesús*, Madrid: San Pablo, 2005.
433. RIVERO C., GEMENTIZA, “Putting God First: An Introduction to Consciousness Examen,” in *Philippiniana Sacra*, vol. XLIII/129 (2008) pp. 499-521.
434. ROBERT, SYLVIE, “Aux sources de la relecture: l’examen de conscience,” in *Christus* 44 (1997) pp. 230-239.
435. -----, “Union with God in the Ignatian Election,” in *The Way Supplement* 103 (2002), pp. 100-112.
436. -----, “Spiritual Midwifery,” in Munitiz, Joseph A. (Ed. & Trns.), *Ignatian Spirituality: A Selection of Continental Studies in Translation*, Oxford: Way Books, 2016, pp. 187-198.
437. RODRÍGUEZ MOLERO, FRANCISCO X., “Palma, Luis de la,” in *DHCJ* vol. III, pp. 2960-2961.
438. RODRÍGUEZ OLAIZOLA, JOSÉ MARÍA, *Ignacio de Loyola, Nunca Solo*, Madrid: San Pablo, 2006.
439. RODRIGUEZ OSORIO, HERMANN, “Spiritual Accompaniment during the Spiritual Exercises According to St. Ignatius of Loyola,” *Review of Ignatian Spirituality*, no. 108, pp. 73 -91.
440. ROTSAERT, MARK, “When are Spiritual Exercises Ignatian Spiritual Exercises,” *Review of Ignatian Spirituality*, 98, pp. 29-40.
441. ROUSTANG, FRANÇOIS, “The Paradox of Self-Denial and Self-Liberation,” in Munitiz, Joseph A. (ed. & trans.), *Ignatian Spirituality: A Selection of Continental Studies in Translation*, Oxford: Way Books, 2016, pp. 199-219.
442. ROYO MARÍN, ANTONIO, *Teología de la perfección cristiana*, Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1955.

443. ROYON, ELIAS, "Los ejercicios ignacianos: una metodología para la formación," in *Manresa* 55 (1985) pp. 245-256.
444. -----, "Principio y fundamento," in *DEI*, pp. 1490-1497.
445. RUBIO, JORDI, "Notas sobre los libros de lectura espiritual en Barcelona entre 1500 y 1530" in *AHSI*, XXVI (1957) pp. 317-327.
446. RUIZ JURADO, MANUEL, "El impacto ignaciano en el alma de san Francisco de Borja," in *Manresa* 46 (1974) pp. 105-122.
447. -----, "Un caso de profetismo reformista en la Compañía de Jesús: Gandía 1547-1549," in *AHSI* 43 (1974) pp. 217-266.
448. -----, "Cronología de la vida del P. Jerónimo Nadal, S. J.," in *AHSI* 48 (1979) pp. 248-276.
449. -----, "La Figura de Jerónimo Nadal En la Primera Crisis Grave de la Compañía (1556-1557)" *Manresa* 52 (1980) pp. 135-154.
450. -----, *Orígenes del noviciado en la Compañía de Jesús*, Roma: IHSI, 1980.
451. -----, "La experiencia espiritual de un portero," *Manresa* 60 (1988) pp. 383- 395.
452. -----, "Espiritualidad de la CJ," in *DHSI* vol. II, pp. 1317-1320.
453. -----, "González Dávila, Gil," in *DHCJ* vol. II, p. 1783.
454. -----, "La Puente, Luis de," in *DHCJ* vol. III, pp. 2244-2245.
455. -----, "Nadal, Jerónimo" in *DHCJ*, vol. III, pp. 2793-2796.
456. -----, *15 días con Francisco de Borja*, Madrid: Ciudad Nueva, 2004.
457. -----, *El Peregrino de la Voluntad de Dios*, Madrid: BAC, 2005.
458. -----, *Jerónimo Nadal: el teólogo de la gracia de la vocación*, Madrid: BAC, 2011.
459. -----, *El Discernimiento Espiritual: Teología, Historia, Practica*, Madrid: BAC, 2010.
460. -----, "La oración de san Ignacio en su Diario Espiritual," in *Manresa* 84 (2012) pp. 63-77.
461. RUIZ PÉREZ, FRANCISCO JOSÉ, *Teología del Camino: una aproximación antropológico-teológico a Ignacio de Loyola*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 2000.
462. -----, "Hombre," in *DEI*, pp. 942-947.
463. RUPNIK, MARKO IVAN, *El Examen de conciencia: para vivir como redimidos*, Burgos: Monte Carmelo, 2005.
464. -----, *Human Frailty, Divine Redemption: The Theology and Practice of the Examen*, Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 2011.
465. SAINT-PRIEST, ALEXIS DE, *History of the Fall of the Jesuits*, London: John Murray, 1861.

466. SALIN, DOMINIQUE, "The Treatise on Abandonment to Divine Providence," *The Way* 46/2 (2007) pp. 21-36.
467. SAMPAIO COSTA, ALFREDO, "Elección, in *DEI*, pp. 726-733.
468. SÁNCHEZ-GIRÓN, JOSÉ LUIS, "Cuenta de conciencia," in *DEI*, pp. 520-529.
469. SANZ DE DIEGO, RAFAEL MARÍA, *San Ignacio de Loyola en Alcala de Henares (1526-1527)*, Institución de Estudios Complutenses, 1991.
470. -----, "Inquisición y San Ignacio," in *DEI* pp. 1023-1027.
471. -----, "Diego Laínez (1512-1565)" in *Manresa* 85 (2013) pp. 69-78.
472. SCADUTTO, MARIO, "Il governo di S. Francesco Borgia 1565-1572," in *AHSI* 41 (1972) 136-175.
473. -----, "Laínez, Diego," in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp. 1601-1605.
474. -----, "Salmerón, Alfonso," in *DHCJ* vol. IV, pp. 3474-3476.
475. SCHINELLER, PETER, "From an Ascetical Spirituality of the Exercises to the Apostolic Spirituality of the Constitutions: Laborers in the Lord's Vineyard," in McCoog, Thomas, (ed.), *Ite Inflamate Omnia: Selected Historical Papers from Conferences Held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, Rome: IHSI, 2010, pp. 85-108.
476. SCHURHAMMER, GEORG, *The mission work of the Jesuits in Muthedath (alias: Arthunkal) and Porakad in the 16th and 17th centuries*, 1957.
477. -----, *Francisco Javier: su vida y su tiempo*, Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1992.
478. SERRA BUIXÓ, EUDALDO, *Libro del examen: explicación del examen general y particular, según el espíritu de San Ignacio de Loyola*. Barcelona: Balmes, 1940.
479. SHELDRAKE, PHILIP (ed.), *The Way of Ignatius Loyola*, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis, 1991.
480. SHORE, PAUL., "The *Vita Christi* of Ludolf of Saxony and its Influence on *The Spiritual Exercise* of Ignatius of Loyola," *Studies in Spirituality of the Jesuits* (30/1 January 1998) pp. 1-17.
481. SIEVERNICH, MICHAEL, "La misión y las misiones en la primitiva Compañía de Jesús," in McCoog, Thomas, (ed.), *Ite Inflamate Omnia: Selected Historical Papers from Conferences Held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, Rome: IHSI, 2010.
482. SILOS, LEONARDO R., "Cardoner in the Life of Saint Ignatius of Loyola," in *AHSI* 33 (1964) pp. 3-43.
483. SLUHOVSKY, MOSHE, "A Biography of the Spiritual Exercises," in *Jesuit Historiography Online*, 2016.

484. -----, "Mysticism as an Existential Crisis: Jean-Joseph Surin," in MARYKS, A *Companion*, pp. 139-165.
485. SMITH, CAROL ANN - MERZ, EUGENE F., *Finding God in Each Moment*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 2006.
486. SMITH, HERBERT F., "Discernment of Spirits," in Fleming, David., *Notes on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985, pp. 226-248.
487. SORGE, BARTOLOMEO, "Arrupe, Pedro," in *DHCJ* vol. II, pp.1697-1705.
488. SOTO ARTUÑEDO, WENCESLAO, "El examen particular como autoobservación conductual," in *Manresa* 57/1 (1985) pp. 3-16.
489. -----, "Ignacio de Loyola y la mujer," in *Proyección* 44 (1997) pp. 299-318.
490. SPARROUGH, J. MICHAEL - MANNEY, JIM - HIPSKIND, TIM, *What's your Decision? An Ignatian Approach to Decision Making*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 2010.
491. SPITERIS, YANNIS, "La conoscenza "espeienze" di Dio e la teología nella prospettiva orientale," in *Antoniano* 72/3 (1997) pp. 365-426.
492. STANDAERT, NICOLAS, "The Composition of Place: Creating Space for an Encounter," in *The Way*, 46/1 (2007) pp. 7-20.
493. -----, "The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola in the China Mission of the 17th and 18th Centuries," in *AHSI* LXXXI (2012) pp. 73-124.
494. -----, "What Ignatius Did Not Know About Making Decisions," in *The Way*, 53/3 (2014), 32-55.
495. STANLEY, D. M., *A Modern Scriptural Approach to the Spiritual Exercises*, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis, 1967.
496. SUAUA, PEDRO, *Historia de S. Francisco de Borja*: Zaragoza: Hechos y Dichos, 1963.
497. TARRAGÓ, JOSÉ, "La contemplación mística del V. P. Baltasar Álvarez, S. J., y los Ejercicios," in *Manresa* 9 (1933) pp. 348-363.
498. TARRAGÓ, JOSÉ, "La oración de silencio o quietud (activa) del V. P. Baltasar Álvarez, S.J., y los Ejercicios," in *Manresa* 4 (1928) pp. 165-174, 258-270.
499. TARRAGÓ, JOSÉ, *Magisterio espiritual, ascético y místico de S. Alonso Rodríguez, S.J.*, Barcelona: Librería Religiosa, 1935.
500. TELLECHEA IDÍGORAS, JOSÉ IGNACIO., *Ignacio de Loyola: Solo y a Pie*, Salamanca: Sígueme, 1990.
501. TETLOW, JOSEPH, "Modalidades de ejercicios," in *DEI*, pp. 697-703.
502. THIBODEAUX, MARK E., *God's Voice Within: The Ignatian Way to Discover God's Will*, Chicago: Loyola Press, 2010.

503. -----, *Reimagining the Ignatian Examen*. Chicago: Loyola Press, 2015.
504. THOMPSON, FRANCIS, *Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, Westminster: Newman Press, 1950.
505. TONER, JULES J., *A Commentary on St. Ignatius' Rules for the Discernment of Spirits*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1982.
506. -----, *Discerning God's Will: Ignatius Loyola's Teaching on Christian Decision Making*, St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991.
507. TORNOS, ANDRÉ, "Discernimiento y autocrítica," in Xavier Quinza Lleo/ José J. Alemany (Eds.), *Ciudad de los hombres, ciudad de Dios: Homenaje a Alfonso Álvarez Bolado*, Madrid: UPCo, 1999, pp. 373-395.
508. TRÉMOLIÈRES, FRANÇOIS, "The Witness to These Witnesses": Henri Bremond," in Maryks, *A Companion to Jesuit Mysticism*, Leiden: Brill, 2017, pp. 252-278.
509. UGARTE DE ERCILLA, E, "Tercer centenario del P. Diego Álvarez de Paz," in *Razón y Fe* 58 (1920) pp. 465-473; 59 (1921) pp. 186-197.
510. VALERO AGÚNDEZ, URBANO, *Mujeres Ignacianas*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 2011.
511. -----, "Quien más recibe... gratitud y agradecimiento en san Ignacio," *Manresa* 85 (2013) pp. 21-31.
512. -----, "Reglas de la compañía," in *DEI*, pp. 1546-1550.
513. VALIGNANO, ALESSANDRO, (Herausgegeben und erläutert von Josef Wicki), *Historia del principio y progreso de la Compañía de Jesús en las Indias Orientales (1542-64)*, Roma: IHSI, 1944.
514. VALLE, ANTONIO, "Los Directorio de los Ejercicios," in *Manresa* 3/12 (1927), pp. 326-331.
515. VAUGHAN, RICHARD P., "A Time for Self-Examination," in *The Way* 1 (1961) pp. 177-185.
516. VÁZQUEZ, DIONISIO, *Historia de la vida del P. Francisco de Borja* (transcripción, estudio introductorio y notas de Santiago La Parra López), Gandía: CEIC Alfons el Vell, 2011.
517. VEALE, JOSEPH, *Manifold gifts: Ignatian Essays on Spirituality*, Oxford: Way Books, 2006.
518. VELTRI, JOHN, "Espiritualidad Jesuita," in *Diakonia* 101 (2002) 60 -69.
519. WALSH, JAMES., "Discernment of Spirits" in *Way Supplement* 16, (1972) 54-66.
520. WALSH, MILTON, "To Always be Thinking Somehow about Jesus" *Studies in the Spirituality in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, 43/1 (2011) pp. 1-39.
521. WARD, BENEDICTA "Discernment: A Rare Bird" in *Way Supplement* 64, (1989) pp. 10 -18.
522. WATRIGANT, HENRI, *De examine conscientiae: juxta ecclesiae patres, sanctum Thomam et fratres vitae communis*, Enghien: Bibliothèque des exercices, 1909.
523. WATSON, WILLIAM M., *Sacred Story: an Ignatian Examen for the Third Millennium*, Chicago: Sacred Story Institute, 2012.

524. WOLF, PIERRE, *Discernment, The Art of Choosing Well*, Missouri: Triumphs Books, 1993.
525. WORCESTER, THOMAS, *The Cambridge Companion to the Jesuits*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
526. WULF, FRIEDRICH, *Ignatius Loyola: his personality and Spiritual Heritage*, St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources,
527. YANGUAS, AURELIO (ed.), *Obras espirituales del P. Antonio Cordeses, S.I.: guía teórico-práctica de la perfección*, Madrid: CSIC, 1953.
528. -----, *El santo oficio a los confesores: comentario de algunas normas del Santo Oficio sobre el proceder de los confesores referente al sexto precepto del decálogo*, Oña: Facultad de teología, 1962.
529. YOUNG, WILLIAM J. (trans.), *St. Ignatius' own story as told to Luis González de Càmara with a sampling of his letters*, Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1956.
530. ----- (trns., ed.), *Finding God in all things: essays in Ignatian Spirituality*, Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1958.
531. ZAS FRIZ DE COL, ROSSANO, "La tradición mística ignaciana: I. Autores españoles de los siglos XVI y XVII," in *Manresa* 76 (2004) pp. 391-406.
532. -----, "La tradición mística ignaciana: II. Autores franceses de los siglos XVI al XX," in *Manresa* 77 (2005) pp. 325-342.
533. -----, "Mística Ignaciana," in *DEI*, pp. 1255-1264.
534. -----, "Breve introducción a la mística ignaciana del siglo XVI," in *Ignaziana* 16 (2013), pp. 201-235.
535. -----, "Spirituality and the search for a Triple Unity," in *Studies in Spirituality*, vol. 24 (2014) pp. 1- 23.
536. -----, "Latin-European Scholarship in Spiritual Theology (1954-2013)" in *Studies in Spirituality* 25 (2015) pp. 1-19.
537. ZUBILLAGA, F., - HASNISCH, W., "Breve noticia histórica de la colección MHSI," en *Guía manual de los documentos históricos*, IHSI, 1971, pp. 9-18.
538. ZUBILLAGA, FÉLIX – HANISCH, WALTER (eds.), *Guía manual de los documentos históricos de la Compañía de Jesús de los cien primeros volúmenes, que tratan de los orígenes de la Compañía de San Ignacio, sus compañeros y colaboradores, legislación, pedagogía y misiones de Asia y América*, Roma: Institutum Historicum, 1971.

Spirituality and Morality

1. ABRAHAM, JOSEPH MURRAY, "The Sacrament of Confession in Ignatian Spirituality," part I – IV, in *Ignis*, 2003/1 pp. 4-21; 2003/2 pp. 10-25; 2003/3 pp. 9-29; 2003/4 pp. 6-26.
2. ANGELINI, GIUSEPPE – VALSECCHI, AMBROGGIO, *Disegno storico della teologia morale*, Bologna: EDB, 1972.
3. ARZUBIALDE, SANTIAGO, *Theologia spiritualis: el camino espiritual del seguimiento a Jesús*, vol. 1, Madrid: UPCo, 1989.
4. BACHRACH, DAVID, "Confession in the *Regnum Francorum* (742-900): The Sources Revisited," in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* vol. 54/1 (2003) pp. 3-22.
5. BERNARD, CHARLES ANDRÉ, *Teología espiritual*, Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 2007.
6. BILLER, PETER - MINNIS, A. J. (eds.), *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages*, York: York Medieval Press, 1997.
7. BILLY, DENNIS J. - ORSUTO, DONNA LYNN (eds.), *Spirituality and Morality: Integrating Prayer and Action*, New York: Paulist Press, 1996.
8. BILLY, DENNIS J., "Mysticism and Moral Theology," in *Studia Moralia* 34 (1996) pp. 389-415.
9. BLACK, PETER - KEENAN, JAMES, "The Evolving Self-Understanding of the Moral Theologian: 1900-2000," in *Studia Moralia* 39 (2001) pp. 291-327.
10. BOSSY, JOHN, "The Social History of Confession in the Age of the Reformation," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 25 (1975) pp. 21-38.
11. BOUYER, LOUIS, *Introduction to Spirituality*, New York: Desclée, 1961.
12. CASTRO, SECUNDINO, "Espiritualidad y moral," en *Revista de Espiritualidad* 57, nn. 226-227 (1998) pp. 273-279.
13. CISNEROS, GARCÍA JIMENEZ DE, *Ejercitatorio de la vida espiritual* (presentación por José M.^a Casciaro), Madrid: Ediciones Rialp, 1957.
14. COVENTRY, JOHN., "Theology of Sin in XVI – XVII Century in *The Way Supplement* 48 (1983) 50 -59.
15. CURRAN, CHARLES E., *The Catholic Moral Tradition Today: A Synthesis*, Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1999.
16. DELUMEAU, JEAN, *La Confesión y el perdón*, (versión española de Mauro Armiño), Alianza editorial, 1990.

17. EIRE, CARLOS M. N., *From Madrid to Purgatory: The Art & Craft of Dying in Sixteenth-Century Spain*, Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 1995.
18. FAESEN, ROB, "Why Does the History of Christian Spirituality Matter?" in *The Way* 55/4 (2016) pp. 105-117.
19. GAMARRA, SATURNINO, *Teología espiritual*, Madrid: BAC, 1994.
20. GLASER, JOHN W., "Conscience and Superego: A Key Distinction," in *Theological Studies* 32 (1971) pp. 30-47.
21. -----, "Transition Between Grace and Sin: Fresh Perspectives," in *Theological Studies* 29 (1968) pp. 260-274.
22. GODMAN, PETER, *Paradoxes of Conscience in the High Middle Ages: Abelard, Heloise, and the Archpoet*, Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 2009.
23. GULA, RICHARD M., *Moral Discernment*, New York: Paulist Press, 1997.
24. -----, *The Good Life: Where Morality and Spirituality Converge*, New York: Paulist Press, 1999.
25. -----, "Morality and Spirituality," in Keating, James (ed.), *Moral Theology: New Directions and Fundamental Issues*, New York: Paulist Press, 2004, pp. 162-177
26. HAMEL, ÉDOUARD, "La scelta morale tra coscienza e legge," in *Rassegna di Teologia* 17 (1976) pp. 121-136.
27. HAMILTON, ALASTAIR, *Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth-century Spain: The Alumbrados*, Cambridge: James Clarke & Co. Ltd, 1992.
28. HÄRING, BERNARD, *The Law of Christ* 3 vols., Maryland: The Newman Press, 1964.
29. -----, *La ley de Cristo*, 3 vols., Barcelona: Herder, 1968.
30. HEFLING JR., CHARLES C., "Consciousness," in *NDCSp.*, pp. 202-207.
31. HUGHES, GERARD., "The First Week and Form of Conscience," *Way Supplement* 24 (1975) pp. 6-14.
32. JAMES, WILLIAM, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, New York: New American Library, 1958.
33. JOHN T. MCNEILL, *A History of the Care of Souls*, London, 1952.
34. KATHERINE, JACKSON LUALDI - ANNE T. THAYER (eds.), *Penitence in the Age of Reformations*, Ashgate, 2000.
35. KEATING, JAMES (ed.), *Moral Theology: New Directions and Fundamental Issues*, New York: Paulist Press, 2004.
36. KEENAN, JAMES F., *A History of Catholic Moral Theology in the Twentieth Century: From Confessing Sins to Liberating Consciences*, London: Continuum, 2010.

37. KONIOR, JAN, "Confession Rituals and the Philosophy of Forgiveness in Asian Religions and Christianity," in *Forum Philosophicum* 15 (2010), pp. 91-102.
38. KRAMER, SUSAN, *Sin, Interiority, and Selfhood in the Twelfth-Century West*, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2015.
39. LARRABE, JOSÉ LUIS, "Penitencia y confesión de los pecados según el Concilio de Trento," León: 1978, pp. 131-162. (Originally published in *Studium Legionense* 18, 1977).
40. LEA, HENRY CHARLES, *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church*, vol. I-II -III, Philadelphia: Lea Corporation, 1896.
41. LESNIAK, VALERIE, "Contemporary Spirituality," in *NSCMD*, pp. 7-12.
42. LIENHARD, JOSEPH, "On Discernment of Spirits in the Early Church" in *Theological Studies* 41 (1980) pp. 505-529.
43. LONERGAN, BERNARD, *Insight: a Study of Human Understanding*, London: Darton Longman and Todd, 1958.
44. LÓPEZ AZPITARTE, EDUARDO, "Ética humana y moral cristiana," in *Studia Moralia* 15 (1977) pp. 41-55.
45. MAHONEY, JOHN, *The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of the Roman Catholic Tradition*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.
46. MARTÍN VELASCO, JUAN, *Espiritualidad y mística*, Madrid: SM, 1994.
47. MARTÍNEZ, JULIO LUIS, *Moral social y espiritualidad: una co(i)nspiración necesaria*, Santander: Sal Terrae, 2011.
48. MARTÍNEZ, JULIO LUIS - CAAMAÑO, JOSÉ MANUEL, *Moral fundamental: bases teológicas del discernimiento ético*, Cantabria: Sal Terrae, 2014.
49. MARYKS, ROBERT A., "Confesión," in *DEI*, pp. 378-381.
50. McDONAGH, ENDA, "Morality and Spirituality," in *Studia Moralia* 15 (1977) pp. 121-137.
51. McGRATH, ALISTER E., *Christian Spirituality: An Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999.
52. MIFSUD, TONY, "Una mística de la acción. La implicación mutua entre ética y la espiritualidad," in *Proyección* 50, n. 208 (2003) pp. 7-23.
53. MILLÁN ROMERAL, FERNANDO, *La penitencia hoy: claves para una renovación*, Bilbao/Madrid: Desclée de Brouwer/ UPCo, 2001.
54. MURPHY, FRANCIS X. - VEREECKE, LIEVE, *Estudios sobre historia de la moral*, Madrid: Perpetuo Socorro, 1969.
55. MURRAY, ALEXANDER, "Confession Before 1215," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6/3 (1993) pp. 51-81.

56. NEW SCM DICTIONARY OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY (Philip Sheldrake), London: SCM, 2005.
57. NUEVO DICCIONARIO DE TEOLOGÍA MORAL (Marciano Vidal), Madrid: Paulinas, 1992.
58. O'CONNELL, TIMOTHY, "Conscience," in *NDCSp.*, pp. 199-202.
59. OLIVERA, BERNARDO, *Afectividad y deseo: para una espiritualidad integrada*, Buenos Aires: Lumen, 2007.
60. PALMER, PAUL F. (ed.), *Sacraments and Forgiveness*, Westminster: The Newman Press, 1959.
61. PÉREZ, MARTIN, *Libro de las confesiones: una radiografía de la sociedad medieval española*, Madrid: BAC, 2002.
62. PIANA, GIANNINO, "Conciencia," in *Diccionario teológico enciclopédico*, Navarra, Editorial Verbo Divino, 1995, pp. 165-167.
63. POURRAT, PIERRE, *Christian Spirituality*, 4 vols., London: Burns & Oates, 1922.
64. PRINCIPE, WALTER H., "Toward Defining Spirituality," in *Studies in Religion/ Sciences Religieuses* 12 (1983) pp. 127-141.
65. -----, "Spirituality, Christian," in *NDCSp.*, pp. 931-938.
66. RATZINGER, JOSEPH, et al, *Principles of Christian Morality*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1975.
67. ROUILLARD, PHILIPPE, *Historia de la penitencia, desde los orígenes a nuestros días* (trans. José Luis Arriaga), Mensajero: Bilbao, 1999.
68. SAINZ RODRÍGUEZ, PEDRO, *Espiritualidad Española*, Madrid: Ediciones Rialp, 1961.
69. SCHNEIDERS, SANDRA M., "Religion and Spirituality: Strangers, Rivals, or Partners?" *The Santa Clara Lectures* (Public Lecture at Santa Clara University delivered on February 6, 2000), vol. 6 no. 2, pp. 1-33; *Horizons* 13 (1986) pp. 265-267.
70. -----, "Spirituality in the Academy," in *Theological Studies* 50 (1989) pp. 676-697.
71. -----, "Christian Spirituality: Definitions, Methods, Types," in *NSCMD*, pp. 1-6.
72. -----, "Religious Life: The Dialectic Between Marginality and Transformation," in *NSCMD*, pp. 1-21.
73. SLATER, THOMAS, *A Manual of Moral Theology*, London: Burns & Oates, 1925.
74. SNOECK, ANDREAS, *Escrúpulo, pecado, confesión*, Madrid: Ediciones Fax, 1960.
75. SOLIGNAC, AIMÉ, "Spiritualité," in *DSp* vol. XIV, pp. 1142-1160.
76. SPOHN, WILLIAM, "Conscience and Moral Development," in *Theological Studies* 61 (2000) pp. 122-138.

77. TANQUEREY, ADOLPHE, *The Spiritual Life: A Treatise on Ascetical and Mystical Theology* (Trans. by Herman Brandris), Leuven: Desclée de Brouwer, 1930.
78. TENTLER, THOMAS N., *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977.
79. THE NEW DICTIONARY OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUALITY (Michael Downey), Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1993.
80. TINSLEY, LUCY, *The French Expression for Spirituality and Devotion: A Semantic Study*, Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953.
81. VALSECCHI, AMBROGIO - PRIVITERA, SALVATORE, "Conciencia," in *Nuevo diccionario de teología moral* por Marciano Vidal (edición española) Madrid: Ediciones Paulinas, 1992, pp.233-255.
82. VIDAL GARCÍA, MARCIANO, *Moral y espiritualidad: de la separación a la convergencia*, Madrid: PS, 1997.
83. -----, "Teología moral y teología espiritual: dos disciplinas teológicas 'autónomas' y 'complementarios'," en *Revista Española de Teología* 57/1-3 (1997) pp. 51-77.
84. -----, *Nueva moral fundamental: el hogar teológico de la ética*, Bilbao: Desclée de Brower, 2000.
85. -----, *Historia de la Teología Moral* vol. IV/1, Madrid: Perpetuo Socorro, 2010.
86. -----, *Historia de la Teología Moral* vol. IV/2, Madrid: Perpetuo Socorro, 2010.
87. WAAIJMAN, KEES, *Spirituality: Forms, Foundations and Methods*, (trans. John Vriend) Leuven/Paris: Peeters, 2002.
88. YANGUAS SANZ, JOSÉ MARÍA, "Conciencia," in *Diccionario de Teología*, pp. 146-156.
89. YEOMANS, WILLIAM, "The Formation of Conscience," in *The Way* 11(1972) pp. 267-274.

Others

1. AMIGO FERNÁNDEZ de ARROYABE, M LUISA (ed.), *Humanismo para el siglo XXI: propuestas para el Congreso Internacional*, Bilbao: Universidad de Deusto, 2003.
2. ARMSTRONG A. H., MARKUS, R. A., *Christian Faith and Greek Philosophy*, London: DLT, 1960.
3. BREMOND, HENRI, *A Literary History of Religious Thought in France from the Wars of Religion down to Our Own Times*, (trans. K.L. Montgomery) 3 vols., London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1928-36.

4. BREVE DICCIONARIO ETIMOLÓGICO DE LA LENGUA CASTELLANA (Joan Coromines), Madrid: Gredos, 1967.
5. BUADES, JOSEP, "Islam y cristianismo: el diálogo de las obras," in *Razón y Fe* 247 (2003), pp. 363-380.
6. CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, Roma: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2000.
7. CATECISMO SANTO CONCILIO DE TRENTO, Cuenca, 1803.
8. DE MELLO, ANTHONY, *Seek God Everywhere*, New York: Image, 2010.
9. DICCIONARIO CRITICO ETIMOLÓGICO CASTELLANO HISPANICO (Joan Coromines), Madrid: Gredos, 1981-1991.
10. DICCIONARIO DE AUTORIDADES (Real Academia Española), Madrid: Gredos, 2002.
11. DICCIONARIO DE TEOLOGÍA (Cesar Izquierdo), Pamplona: Eunsa, 2006.
12. DICCIONARIO TEOLÓGICO ENCICLOPÉDICO (Alvarez Lorenzo et al), Navarra: Verbo Divino, 1995.
13. DORAN, ROBERT M., "Affect, Affectivity," in *NDCSp*, pp. 12-14.
14. FRANCIS, POPE, *Amoris Laetitia*, Roma: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2016.
15. GALLAGHER, MICHAEL PAUL, *Into Extra Time*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2016.
16. HUGHES, GERARD W., *God of Surprises*, London: DLT, 2000.
17. HUGHES, GERARD., "Forgotten Truth" in *Way Supplement* 27 (1976) 69-78.
18. HUGHES, LACHLAN M., "Affectivity, Conscience and Christian Choice," in *The Way Supplement* 24 (1975) pp. 36-45.
19. MCBRIEN, RICHARD P., *Catholicism* (New Edition), New York: Harper Collins, 1994.
20. MORRIS, COLIN, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050 to 1250*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
21. NEUNER, J. - DUPUIS, J., *The Christian Faith* (7th ed.), Bangalore: Theological Publication in India, 2004.
22. PAQUDA, IBN, *Los deberes de los corazones* (traducción de Joaquín Lomba Fuentes), Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1994.
23. REVUELTA GONZÁLEZ, MANUEL, *Historia y espíritu en tierras Palentinas: Camino de Santiago y otros afanes*, Palencia, 2010.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

- ASCHENBRENNER: 469, 470, 471, 472,
473, 474, 475, 476, 495, 496, 497,
508
- BORJA/BORGIA: 90, 97, 141, 142, 143,
144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150,
151, 152, 153, 157, 163, 347, 369,
370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 382,
396
- CALVERAS: 80, 81, 84, 86, 439, 440, 441,
442, 443, 444, 495, 496
- CANISIUS: 112, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183,
184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190,
191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 263
- CAUSSADE: 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293,
294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300,
301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 332, 333
- CORDESES: 5, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160,
161, 162, 163, 164, 262, 263, 353,
372, 504
- CRASSET: 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311,
312, 313, 314, 315, 333, 507
- DELCHARD: 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454,
455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461,
462, 463, 465, 495, 496, 497, 508
- ENGLISH: 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481,
497, 508
- FABER FAVRE: 90, 108, 109, 110, 111,
117, 118, 141, 152, 179, 180, 182,
367, 503
- FIORITO: 369, 370, 482, 483, 484, 485,
486, 487, 488, 495, 497, 508
- GAGLIARDI: 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217,
263, 353, 361, 362
- GONZÁLEZ DÁVILA: 165, 166, 167, 168,
169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175,
176, 177, 178, 179, 263, 354, 360
- GONZÁLEZ H: 487, 488, 490, 491, 495
- GÖRRES: 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449,
495, 496
- HOWARD: 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 495,
496, 497, 508
- JAVIER/XAVIER: 90, 111, 112, 113, 114,
115, 116, 117, 432, 503
- JAY: 117, 118, 119, 120, 153, 192
- LA PALMA: 5, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222,
223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229,
230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236,
237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243,
244
- LA PUENTE: 5, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249,
250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256,
257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263

- LAÍNEZ: 105, 106, 119, 120, 121, 130,
142, 157, 366, 367, 369, 373, 398,
399, 429
- LALLEMANT: 267, 268, 269, 270, 271,
272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278,
289, 332, 333, 460, 466, 506, 507
- NADAL: 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125,
126, 127, 128, 129, 153, 165, 342,
351
- PENNING DE VRIES: 467, 468, 508
- POLANCO: 90, 124, 129, 130, 131, 133,
135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 153,
340, 345, 352, 353, 359, 372, 374
- LA PUENTE: 5, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249,
250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256,
257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263
- RODRÍGUEZ: 5, 156, 195, 196, 197, 198,
199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205,
206, 263, 505
- SALMERÓN: 117, 119, 120, 121, 153, 192,
367
- SCARAMELLI: 21, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319,
320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 236,
327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333
- SUÁREZ: 5, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211,
212, 245, 262, 263
- SURIN: 266, 267, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281,
282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288,
299, 332, 333, 506, 507