



FACULTAD DE TEOLOGÍA

INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO DE ESPIRITUALIDAD

**IGNATIAN SPIRITUAL EXERCISES**

**AND**

**EASTERN PRAYER METHODS**

Interfaith Dialogue and Practice



**Autor: John Pradeep Kantharaj, S.J.**

**Director: Prof Dr. D. Pascual Cebollada Silvestre, S.J.**

**Madrid- Mayo 2016**



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**Vº Bº**

**Prof. Dr. D. Pascual Cebollada Silvestre, S.J.**

**Fdo.**

**Madrid- Mayo 2016**

## DEDICATION



**Mother Teresa of Calcutta**  
(26 August 1910 – 5 September 1997)

**“By blood and origin I am an Albanian.  
My citizenship is Indian.  
I am a Catholic nun.  
As to my calling, I belong to the whole world.  
As to my heart, I belong entirely to the heart of Jesus.”**

- Quoted in Eileen Egan, *Such a Vision of the Street: Mother Teresa – The Spirit and the Work*, Sidgwick & Jackson, London 1986, 399.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Apostolicam Actuositatem
Ait Up	Aitrya Upanishad
Au	Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola
AG	Ad Gentes
BAC	Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos. Madrid
Brihad Up	Brihadaaryanyaka Upanishad
C.B.C.I.	Catholic Bishops Conference of India
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
Chāndog Up	Chāndogya Upanishad
CIS	Centrum Ignatianum Spiritualitatis. Roma
Co	Constitutions of the Society of Jesus
D	decree
DEI	Diccionario de Espiritualidad Ignaciana. Bilbao - Santander
DHCJ	Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús. Roma - Madrid
Ed (s)	editor (s)
EE	Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio de Loyola
FABC	Federation of Asian Bishop's Conference
FN	Fontes Narrativi
GC	General Congregation
GS	Gaudium et spes
GSP	Gujarat Sahitya Prakash. Anand
IHSI	Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu. Roma
Kaiv. Up	Kaivalya Upanishad
LG	Lumen Gentium
Man	Manresa. Madrid
Mānd. Up	Māndukya Upanishad
M-ST	Mensajero- Sal Terrae. Bilbao - Santander

MHSI	Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu. Madrid - Roma
MI	Monumenta Ignatiana
MV	Misericordiae Vultus
n /No (s)	Number (s)
NA	Nostra Aetate
OF	Orationis Formas
RH	Redemptor Hominis
SpEx	Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola
UPComillas	Universidad Pontificia Comillas
VJTR	Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection
Vol(s)	Volume (s)

# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

I deepened my understanding of the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* especially about the Ignatian prayer methods while doing masters in Ignatian spirituality last year. I am also familiar to some extent with the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen. The practice of these prayer methods have indeed enriched my daily prayer experience. I have also come across and interacted with some Christians in India as well as during my stay in Spain who practice regularly or being attracted to these Eastern forms of prayer. While studying the Spiritual Theology, I recognized the need for an interfaith dialogue between Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen in order to enrich the prayer experience while making the Ignatian *Exercises*. Hence I opted for this theme basically to deepen my own knowledge of these Eastern prayer methods as well as to study the possibility of enriching the prayer experience during the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* by incorporating the basic insights of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen.

## **Prayer and Prayer Methods; A Universal Religious Phenomenon**

Every human person has an innate quest of for God. According to Christian belief, every human being on the face of the earth, by nature, is religious for the fact that “man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for”<sup>1</sup>. It is worth recalling here the famous saying of St Augustine of Hippo; “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you”<sup>2</sup>.

Prayer is the surge of human heart. One of the greatest theologians, St. Thomas Aquinas, defines prayer as an “expresión del deseo que el hombre tiene de Dios”<sup>3</sup>. Prayer is

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<sup>1</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 27. Hereafter I use the abbreviation CCC.

<sup>2</sup> *Confessions* book I,1

<sup>3</sup> As cited in: Benedicto XVI, *Escuela de oración*, Editorial Ciudad Nueva, Madrid 2012, 23.

seen as “the spiritual communication /communion that creates and sustains a relationship with the living God. Relationship with God functions as a type of template for all other human relationships”<sup>4</sup>. Hence the religions instruct their followers to desire God as well as earnestly search for God or the ultimate reality with single minded devotion. For instance, CCC firmly affirms: “Even after losing through his sin his likeness to God, man remains an image of his Creator, and retains the desire for the one who calls him into existence. All religions bear witness to men's essential search for God”<sup>5</sup>.

The attraction or desire that human person has towards God is the soul of prayer that is expressed in numerous forms. The pope emeritus, Benedict XVI, says:

Atracción hacia Dios que Dios mismo ha puesto en el hombre es el alma de la oración, que se reviste de muchas formas y modalidades según la historia, el tiempo, el momento, la gracia e incluso el pecado de cada orante. En efecto, la historia del hombre ha conocido distintas formas de oración porque ha desarrollado distintas modalidades de apertura hacia el Otro y hacia el más allá, de modo que podemos reconocer la oración como una experiencia presente en toda religión y cultura<sup>6</sup>.

Prayer as “a universal phenomenon of religion, has passed through a long history in the development of mankind”<sup>7</sup>. The CCC teaches: “In many ways, throughout history down to the present day, men have given expression to their quest for God in their religious beliefs and behaviour: in their prayers, sacrifices, rituals, meditations, and so forth. These forms of religious expression, despite the ambiguities they often bring with them, are so universal”<sup>8</sup>. Thus we can affirm that prayer is a universal phenomenon of religion as we have just noted in the teaching of the CCC.

Prayer and ways of praying are found in every religious tradition including Christianity. All the masters of spiritual life have taught their disciples to pray including Jesus<sup>9</sup> because “la oración requiere una enseñanza y un método, sobre todo para llegar a la cumbre de lo que trata

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<sup>4</sup> Baesler, E. J., “The prayer of the holy name in eastern and western spiritual traditions: A theoretical, cross-cultural, and intercultural prayer dialogue”, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 38: 2-3, (2001), 196-197.

<sup>5</sup> CCC 2566.

<sup>6</sup> Benedicto XVI, *Escuela de oración*, 23.

<sup>7</sup> Carson, T-Cerrito, J (eds.), *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Thomson, Gale 2003<sup>2</sup>, 588.

<sup>8</sup> CCC 28.

<sup>9</sup> Jesus taught his disciples to pray the ‘Our Father’ when his disciples urged him to teach them to pray like John the Baptist was teaching his disciples (Lk 11, 1).

de lograr: la unión con Dios”<sup>10</sup>. St Ignatius of Loyola proposed some ways of praying in his *Spiritual Exercises* [SpEx 238-260] to nourish the spiritual quest of the people by “*preparing and disposing the soul to get rid itself of all its disordered affections and then, after their removal, of seeking and finding God's will in the ordering of our life for the salvation of one's soul*” [SpEx 1], “*to overcome oneself and to order one's life* [SpEx 21]” by divesting “*oneself of self-love, self-will, and self-interests*” [SpEx 189] by doing so establish right relationship with God the principle and foundation of the universe [SpEx 23].

In the recent times, however, there is a keen interest in many Christians especially in the west for the study and practice of Eastern prayer methods<sup>11</sup>. As a result, a good number of Christians throng some of the Eastern countries predominantly India. The Catholic Church has expressed its deep concerns in the apostolic letter *Orationis Formas*.

### ***Orationis Formas: Its concerns***

In the globalized world of today, the Christians have an easy access to other religions and their prayer methods. The letter *Orationis Formas* highlights two predominant reasons (OF 2) why some Christians opt to practice eastern prayer methods especially Yoga and Zen.

First and foremost, a lot of Christians today are greatly attracted to these methods for therapeutic reasons. The spiritual restlessness or meaninglessness in life arising from a hectic life subjected to the driving pace of a technologically advanced society makes a number of Christians to seek in these methods of prayer some sort of interior peace and psychic balance<sup>12</sup>.

#### ***Orationis Formas Says***

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<sup>10</sup> Luzarraga, J., *Orando con Ignacio tras Jesús*, Mensajero, Bilbao 1990, 12.

<sup>11</sup> The expression "eastern methods" is used in *Orationis Formas* (OF) (Letter of the congregation for the doctrine of faith to the bishops of the Catholic Church on some aspects of Christian meditation dated October 15, 1989) to refer to "methods which are inspired by Hinduism and Buddhism, such as "Zen," "Transcendental Meditation" or "Yoga." Thus it indicates methods of meditation of the non-Christian Far East which today are not infrequently adopted by some Christians also in their meditation. The orientation of the principles and methods contained in this present document is intended to serve as a reference point not just for this problem, but also, in a more general way, for the different forms of prayer practiced nowadays in ecclesial organizations, particularly in associations, movements and groups": OF, Endnotes n. 1. For a critical review of OF see, Samy, Ama., "Can a Christian Practice Zen, Yoga or TM", *VJTR* 54, (1990), 155-163; Cervera, J. C., "La meditación Cristiana. Un carta de la congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe", *Revista de Espiritualidad* 50, (1991), 43-65.

<sup>12</sup> OF speaks absolutely nothing of psychological aspect instead focuses mainly on the theological and spiritual implications of Eastern prayer methods.

Many Christians today have a keen desire to learn how to experience a deeper and authentic prayer life despite the not inconsiderable difficulties which modern culture places in the way of the need for silence, recollection and meditation. The interest which in recent years has been awakened also among some Christians by forms of meditation associated with some eastern religions and their particular methods of prayer is a significant sign of this need for spiritual recollection and a deep contact with the divine mystery (OF 1).

Secondly, a few Christians (as we have highlighted in the third chapter) who have shown openness to and exchanges between various religions and cultures, deem that their prayer is very much enriched by the practice of the Eastern methods of praying. They seem to turn to a new training in prayer by incorporating Eastern methods to enhance their prayer experience to fulfil the deep quest for spiritual recollection and a deep contact with the divine mystery. So, one sees a keen interest in many to learn and practice the Eastern prayer methods particularly Yoga and Zen.

The universal Church is very much apprehensive of this development in the recent decades as it is felt that the practice of these Eastern prayer methods may not facilitate an authentic Christian prayer experience because the intimate nature of Christian prayer according to *Orationis Formas* is the following:

Christian prayer is always determined by the structure of the Christian faith, in which the very truth of God and creature shines forth. For this reason, it is defined, properly speaking, as a personal, intimate and profound dialogue between man and God. It expresses therefore the communion of redeemed creatures with the intimate life of the Persons of the Trinity. This communion, based on Baptism and the Eucharist, source and summit of the life of the Church, implies an attitude of conversion, a flight from "self" to the "You" of God. Thus Christian prayer is at the same time always authentically personal and communitarian. It flees from impersonal techniques or from concentrating on oneself, which can create a kind of rut, imprisoning the person praying in a spiritual privatism which is incapable of a free openness to the transcendental God. Within the Church, in the legitimate search for new methods of meditation it must always be borne in mind that the essential element of authentic Christian prayer is the meeting of two freedoms, the infinite freedom of God with the finite freedom of man (OF 3).

Some Christians are of the opinion that "many traditional methods of meditation, especially Christian ones, have fallen into disuse<sup>13</sup>", they wonder whether it might not now be possible, by a new training in prayer, to enrich our heritage by incorporating what has until

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<sup>13</sup> Of late, however, it is observed that the Ignatian prayer methods that Ignatius proposes in the *Spiritual Exercises* have not been well made use of. See Coupeau, C., "Una alternativa ignaciana poco utilizada: Tres modos de orar", *Man* 81, (2009), 157-166.

now been foreign to it”(OF 2). So frequently ask themselves what value or relevance the non-Christian forms of meditation might have for the followers of Christ (OF 2). In this context, therefore, I consider it essential to engage in an interfaith dialogue. So in this dissertation paper, in the light of the personal experience and the writings of some the Christian practitioners (specially the Jesuits) of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen, I am making an humble attempt to highlight that the incorporation of the insights of the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen are indeed relevant for the enrichment of the Christian prayer experience particularly while making the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*.

Interfaith dialogue between Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods is certainly a new and unchartered frontier. Hence we need to bear in mind the presupposition of St. Ignatius: “to be more eager to put a good interpretation on a neighbour’s statement than to condemn it” [SpEx 22] as we would definitely encounter some misconceptions and misunderstandings.

### **Objective of the paper**

As a Jesuit, I have been introduced to the Ignatian prayer and prayer methods mainly through the Ignatian *Exercises*. As an Indian, I have been acquainted with some of the prominent Eastern prayer methods such as Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen. Hence in this dissertation paper, I am deeply interested and concerned about engaging in an interfaith dialogue between Ignatian *Exercises* and widely practised Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen keeping in mind the following three pertinent questions:

1. What is the essence and the ultimate goal of the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen?
2. What are the common elements as well as differences that exist between the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen?
3. How can we incorporate some of the insights of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen to enrich the Christian prayer experience especially while doing the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*?

While dealing with these questions, I would also attempt to respond to some of the concerns expressed in the apostolic letter *Orationis Formas* about Christians practicing Eastern prayer methods particularly Yoga and Zen taking into account the personal experience and the

writings of some of the prominent Christian practitioners (specially the Jesuits) of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen.

### **Content of the paper**

The first chapter deals with the crux and the various prayer methods of the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*. In the second chapter, we attempt to discuss about the essence and objective of the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen. The concluding chapter aims at bringing out the significance of interfaith dialogue and practice of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen by engaging in a comparative study to point out the points of convergence and divergence between Ignatian *Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods as well as how we could fruitfully employ some of the key insights of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen to enhance the prayer experience during the Ignatian *Exercises*.

### **Methodology of the paper**

For the initial two chapters, I would employ a descriptive method to point out the basic elements of Ignatian and Eastern prayer methods in the light of the available literature. However, for the concluding chapter, I intend to use an analytical method as I engage in a comparative study to bring about the points of similarities and differences between the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen.

### **Acknowledgements**

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# CHAPTER 1

## IGNATIAN SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

### A School of Prayer<sup>14</sup>

#### Introduction

The book of the *Spiritual Exercises* is undoubtedly the best known work of Ignatius of Loyola. It is a highly effective instrument to enhance consciousness of God, self and the world. Ignatian *Exercises* was the fruit of his own profound personal experience of God. It is an outcome of Ignatius' deep longing for God, seeking to do God's will as well as a staunch desire for union with God and God's creation. Since the time of his conversion at Loyola, Ignatius carried a book jotted down his spiritual insights as he went about deepening his God consciousness year after year [Au 18]<sup>15</sup>. Eventually Ignatius gathered the fruit of his prayers, meditations, reflections, and spiritual direction into a carefully designed framework of a retreat, which he called the “*Spiritual Exercises*”<sup>16</sup>. Ignatian *Exercises* is meant basically for those who earnestly desire to order their life for the greater love of God and for the service of God by seeking always the will of God [SpEx 1, 5, 20, 21] so that they are enabled to choose that state of Christian life that God wills or desires for them [SpEx 135]. In this chapter, we shall examine the genesis of the text, the crux of the Ignatian *Exercises*, spiritual itinerary (method and modality), forms and methods of Ignatian prayer that we encounter in the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*.

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<sup>14</sup> Jesuit General Congregation (GC) 31, Decree (D) 15, Nos. 3-4.

<sup>15</sup> The number of the *Autobiography* as given in the book: Rambla, J. M., *El Peregrino*, M-ST, Bilbao – Santander 2003.

<sup>16</sup> *Monumenta Exercitiae (I Exercitia spiritualia, Textus)*, Roma 1969 (MHSI 100); *Monumenta Exercitiae (II, Directoria 1540 -1599)*, Roma 1955 (MHSI 76).

## **1. Genesis of the Text of the Ignatian *Exercises***

It is definitely the divine influence that made Ignatius to compose the *Spiritual Exercises*. Ignatius himself acknowledges categorically that “God treated him just as a school master treats a child whom he is teaching” [Au 65]. It is “out of his incessant search for God’s presence and will, Ignatius developed a way of proceeding. The way of proceeding is found in the pilgrimage of the *Spiritual Exercises*”<sup>17</sup>.

While narrating about his profound God experience at Manresa in the *Autobiography* [Au18-34], Ignatius doesn’t mention about the composition of the *Spiritual Exercises*. However on October 20, 1538, when Luis Gonçalves da Camara enquired with him about the composition of the *Exercises* and the Jesuit *Constitutions*, Ignatius spoke about it saying that he did not compose at one go but put them in writing as and when he observed some things in his soul and found them useful for helping souls<sup>18</sup>. Evidently, “en los Ejercicios, se hace presente en gran medida, el carisma, el don, la gracia ofrecida por Dios a Ignacio para el bien y la “ayuda de las ánimas”<sup>19</sup>. Ignatius also told Luis da Cámara that he derived the elections in particular from that diversity of spirit and thoughts that he had at Loyola while he was still recuperating for the injury in the leg [Au 99]. The writing down the *Spiritual Exercises* lasted for almost two decades started in Manresa (1522) and completed in Rome (around 1541)<sup>20</sup>.

### **1.1 Genesis of the Ignatian *Exercises***

#### **1.1.1 Loyola (1521)**

As we read in the *Autobiography* that during the convalescence in Loyola, Ignatius became deeply conscious of the presence of God and his interior movements of the soul. The method

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<sup>17</sup> GC 34, D 1, n. 5. GC texts taken from the edition: Padberg, J. W., *Jesuit life and Mission Today, the decrees of the 31st-35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St Louis 2009.

<sup>18</sup> “San Ignacio iba escribiendo todo lo que vivía. Tomaba notas. Iba descubriendo qué venia de Dios y qué era tentación de volver a vivir centrado en sí mismo. Más tarde, ordenó estas notas de forma pedagógica y las propuso a otros que querían hacer un camino espiritual profundo. Esto son los *Ejercicios espirituales*”: Borrás, P., *Orar con San Ignacio de Loyola*, Seminari EE 2 [Cristianisme I Justícia ed.] Mayo 1990, 5.

<sup>19</sup> García de Castro, J., “Introduction”, in *DEI*, Mensajero – Sal Terrae (M-ST), Bilbao – Santander 2007, 15.

<sup>20</sup> I have consulted the following works to discuss about the genesis of the text of the *Spiritual Exercises*; Dalmases, C. De., *Ejercicios Espirituales*, Sal Terrae, Santander 1985, 14-16; Melloni, J., “Ejercicios Espirituales: el texto”, *DEI*, 685-689. For a detailed study see Dalmases, C. De (ed.), *Ignatii de Loyola Exercitia spiritualia: Textuum antiquissimorum nova editio*, MHSI, Roma 1969, 4-35.

of election [SpEx 169-184] is the fruit of Ignatius' awareness of the movements of spirits [Au 99]. The reading of *Vita Christi* of Ludolfo el Cartujano made a deep impact on Ignatius. Watrigant was the first to figure out the similarities that exist between *Vita Christi* and some of the Ignatian *Exercises*. “La organización de las contemplaciones que encontramos en los *Ejercicios* (una oración inicial, un desarrollo con diversos puntos y un coloquio) corresponde al modo en que Ludolfo el Cartujano propone sus capítulos sobre los misterios de la vida de Cristo”<sup>21</sup>.

### **1.1.2 Manresa (1522-23)**

It is in Manresa where he stayed for about 11 months, Ignatius began to compose the *Spiritual Exercises* soon after some profound mystical experiences of God. The book is the outcome of his own spiritual experience that he had during his conversion to spiritual living at Loyola,Montserrat, and his previous months at Manresa. Hence we can say that Ignatius made the *Exercises* himself first before he jotted them down with a desire to help his fellow human beings. At Manresa Ignatius formulated the *Principle and Foundation* [SpEx 23], Particular Examination [SpEx 24-31], General Examination [SpEx 32-43], the contemplation of the Kingdom of Christ [SpEx 91-99], Meditation on Two Standards [SpEx 136-147], The rules to distinguish mortal and venial sins, Rules for discernment of the First week [SpEx 313-327], Three methods of praying [SpEx 228-260].

### **1.1.3 Barcelona, Alcalá, Salamanca, Paris (1522-35)**

We can surmise that the Three Classes of Persons [SpEx 149-157], Three Ways of Being Humble [SpEx 165-168], Contemplation to Attain Love [SpEx 230-237], the annotations that describe about the dispositions that the exercitant should possess [SpEx 3, 5, 11,12, 13, 16, 20], The additional directives [SpEx 73-90], and the first series of Rules for Thinking, Judging, and Feeling with the Church [SpEx 352-365] were composed by Ignatius during his stay in Paris.

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<sup>21</sup> Melloni, J., “Ejercicios espirituales: el texto”, *DEI*, 686.

### **1.1.4 Italy (1536-41)**

From 1536 to 1539, Ignatius spent time in doing the revision of *Spiritual Exercises* as observed by Nadal. The annotations [SpEx 1, 2, 4, 6-10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19] that are directed to the giver of the *Exercises*, the final redaction of Principle and Foundation, The Mysteries of the Life of Christ [SpEx 261-312] and Rules to Order Oneself in the Taking of Food [SpEx 210-217] were written down during his stay in Italy. While staying in Rome Ignatius completed the full redaction of the *Spiritual Exercises* with the Rules of Discernment for the Second Week [SpEx 328-336], Notes toward Perceiving and Understanding Scruples [SpEx 345-351] and the final formulation of the Rules for Thinking, Judging, and Feeling with the Church [SpEx 352-370].

## **1.2 Gathering of Companions by Means of the *Spiritual Exercises* and Spiritual Conversations**

The *Spiritual Exercises* was the main instrument that Ignatius made use of for helping souls and to establish the Society of Jesus along with his 9 first companions. During his stay in Barcelona as well as in Alcalá, Ignatius engaged himself vigorously in helping souls by way of spiritual conversations and teaching catechism. While being imprisoned, as the *Autobiography* points out, Ignatius began to give the *Spiritual Exercises* to those who visited him [Au 60], although the method of giving the *Exercises* was not well developed. Ignatius continued to give the *Exercises* even while studying at Salamanca. Ignatius always longed to talk about his God experience to people. Years later, Ignatius wrote about it to John III, the king of Portugal: “In Spain, one was wondering as not having done studies, I was able to strike a spiritual conversation such a long duration”<sup>22</sup>. However, Ignatius was prohibited to impart spiritual teaching to people as he had not done his philosophical and theological studies [Au 60, 65, 66]. Hence in order to pursue his further studies, Ignatius decided to move to Paris [Au 70-71].

In Paris, Ignatius through the instrumentality of spiritual conversations<sup>23</sup> succeeded in gathering his first companions [Au 71, 82, 85]. These first 9 companions<sup>24</sup> formed the nucleus

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<sup>22</sup> Letter to John III, King of Portugal, Rome 15 March, 1545 (Epp 1, 296-298).

<sup>23</sup> García de Castro, J., “Los primeros de París. Amistad, carisma y pauta”, *Man* 78 (2006), 263.

<sup>24</sup> The group had members from different nations. Ignatius of Loyola, Francisco Javier, Diego Laínez, Alfonso Salmerón and Nicolás Bobadilla (Spain); Simão Rodrigues (Portugal); Paschase Broët and Jean Codure (France); Pierre Favre and Claude Jay (Savoy).

of the Society of Jesus. “The *Autobiography* narrates the evolving power of God’s grace which moulded Ignatius into a man who opened himself to the needs of others. This simple reality, to help others, spurred Ignatius to study and training, to the gathering of companions, and, eventually, to the founding of the Society”<sup>25</sup>. Ignatius had been their “master” teaching them and leading them through the experience of the *Spiritual Exercises*<sup>26</sup> [Au 82]. The *Spiritual Exercises* was “para cada uno de ellos y para todo el grupo, el método para la amistad que los llevaría a Cristo; en Él se fundamentaba el sentido y el sentir del grupo; en Él se hacía fuerte su fragilidad”<sup>27</sup>. The Society of Jesus came into existence by the internal force of the Ignatius’ *Spiritual Exercises*<sup>28</sup>. It is through the instrumentality of the *Exercises*, Ignatius “won and trained the first followers with whom he founded the Society of Jesus”<sup>29</sup>. Whatever we have seen so far could be summarized in the words of Pere Borrás:

Ignacio hizo un largo itinerario geográfico y también espiritual: Loyola, Monserrat, Manresa, Barcelona, Alcalá, Salamanca, París, Venecia, Roma... Y hasta el final con los ojos puestos en Jerusalén, la tierra de Jesús. Deseo de entrega, tentaciones, penitencia, enfermedad, estudio, anuncio del Evangelio, grupo de compañeros... Y siempre consciente de que Dios le trataba de la misma manera que trata un maestro de escuela a un niño, enseñándole. Y San Ignacio iba escribiendo todo lo que vivía. Tomaba notas. Iba descubriendo qué venía de Dios y qué era tentación de volver a vivir centrado en sí mismo. Más tarde, ordenó estas notas de forma pedagógica y las propuso a otros que querían hacer un camino espiritual profundo. Esto son los *Ejercicios Espirituales*<sup>30</sup>.

## 2. The Essence or Crux of the Ignatian *Exercises*

In his introduction to the *DEI*, José García de Castro comments:

Ya con cierta madurez en su seguimiento personal de Jesucristo, después de veintiséis años de haber salido de Loyola, aparece la primera publicación de los *Ejercicios Espirituales* (Roma 1548), que recogen la experiencia de Ignacio y la ofrecen lingüísticamente para poder ser actualizada, vivida por otros<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> GC 34, D 1, *United with Christ on Mission*, n. 6.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Osuna, J, *Amigos en el Señor*, M-ST, Bilbao-Santander 1998, 78-89. José García de Castro clearly points that when Ignatius gave the *Spiritual Exercises* to the First Jesuits i.e. to Faber (January- February 1534); to Laínez and Salmerón (May 1534); to Simon Rodríguez and Bobadilla (July 1536); to Xavier (September 1534); Faber in turn gave the Exercises to Jay (November 1534) and to Codure and Broët (1536) they were not following Ignatius but the Lord Jesus certainly imbibing the method and spirit of Ignatius to labour for the universal mission of Christ as friends in the Lord. García de Castro, J., “Los primeros de París. Amistad, carisma y pauta”, 269.

<sup>27</sup> García de Castro, J., “Los primeros de París. Amistad, carisma y pauta”, 268.

<sup>28</sup> GC 31, D 1, n. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Ganss. G. E., *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius*, GSP, Anand 1995, 8.

<sup>30</sup> Borrás, P., *Orar con San Ignacio de Loyola*, 5.

<sup>31</sup> García de Castro, J., “Introduction”, *DEI*, 15.

We have strongly become conscious of the significance of mystical prayer experience of Ignatius as well as the richness of the prayer life of Ignatius and the originality of the *Spiritual Exercises* only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. William Barry writes:

Hasta 1960 muy pocos conocían la oración mística del mismo Ignacio. Los Ejercicios Espirituales anuales eran muy regimentados y se enfocaban hacia la reforma personal de la vida moral. Muchos directores espirituales jesuitas daban la impresión de que la meditación de las tres potencias del alma, de la Primera Semana, era el sello distintivo de la oración ignaciana. En estos últimos años nos hemos hecho más conscientes de las riquezas de la vida de oración de Ignacio y de la originalidad de los *Ejercicios Espirituales*<sup>32</sup>.

The *Autobiography* of Ignatius reveals to us his deep prayer life<sup>33</sup>. The *Autobiography* of Ignatius is basically “the story of that change brought about by God and of Inigo’s pilgrim search for God and desire to cooperate with God”<sup>34</sup>. The *Autobiography* [Au 1] commences by stating that up till the age of 26, Inigo of Loyola’s main aim in life had been to achieve fame and vain glory. He was highly conscious of his personal appearance. As a young knight, Inigo was persuasive, firm of will, tenacious and stubborn. However, God had his own plans for an ambitious young man. Inigo was badly injured in the battle of Pamplona. The reading of the *Life of Christ* by Ludolph Saxony and the *Life of Saints* by Jacobs de Voragine while he was recuperating at Loyola and subsequent miraculous recovery brought about a profound conversion and change in the heart of Inigo [Au 5]. Ignatius turned out to be a man of prayer by the grace of God.

La experiencia de Dios de Ignacio fue recogida en la llamada *Autobiografía*; lo ignaciano quedó plasmado en el texto de los *Ejercicios Espirituales*. La primera es el relato hecho por el mismo Ignacio de su itinerario espiritual. No es propiamente una *autobiografía* en el sentido moderno de la palabra, sino una especie de radiografía interior de la experiencia espiritual de Ignacio a lo largo de su vida. Por eso en la *Autobiografía* el Ignacio histórico (la crónica) casi desaparece para dar lugar a la acción de Dios en su vida. Los *Ejercicios* son el resultado de la reflexión sistemática de Ignacio sobre su proceso interior<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> Barry, W. A., “Oración ignaciana”, 1370. “In the 1960s Ignatian Spirituality found fresh energy and took a new direction. A renewed study of its sources, in particular the most important foundational texts, which had begun before Vatican II and received a fresh impetus from the Council, eventually led to something like a revolution in people’s understanding of the elements of Ignatian spirituality and crucially the Spiritual Exercises”: Lonsdale, D., *Eyes to see, ears to hear*, Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, London 2013, 17.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Echarte, I (ed.), *Concordancia Ignaciana*, M- ST, Bilbao – Santander 1996, 873-874.

<sup>34</sup> Jacob, P., *Ignatian Discernment*, GSP, Anand 2008, 149.

<sup>35</sup> Palacio, C., “Experiencia de Dios”, *DEI*, 855.

Ignatius states in the opening paragraph of his book that the crux and the ultimate purpose of his *Spiritual Exercises* is “preparing and disposing the soul to get rid itself of all its disordered affections and then, after their removal, of seeking and finding God’s will in the ordering of our life for the salvation of one’s soul” [SpEx 1]. “Los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio han sido y son para la Iglesia de Occidente una fuente de inspiración, un impulso y un camino para adentrarse en el misterio de Dios, y a través de él, en el misterio de uno mismo y del mundo”<sup>36</sup>. In other words, the book of the *Spiritual Exercises* “is a ‘school of heart’, a learning how to relate a learning of how to read, find and do the will of the other, namely, God”<sup>37</sup>.

Nobody doubts that over the centuries the Exercises have been a real school of prayer, all the more marvellous because they were written by St. Ignatius, who lived a very active spirituality, a spirituality of work. The methods he proposed have proven to be effective pedagogically because they too, like the ancient monks’ methods of prayer, were the fruit of a lived experience, not of erudition<sup>38</sup>.

The *Spiritual Exercises* that Ignatius completed around 1541 are of great help for anyone who desires to seek and to do God’s holy will. The *Official Directory of 1599* summarizes well the ultimate goal of the *Spiritual Exercises*. According to the *Official Directory of 1599*, the Ignatian *Exercises*:

Withdraw a person with all other things and business and lead him into a kind of desert where God may speak to his heart (Hos 2, 14), and he on his part may obey the words of the psalm: “Be still, and see that I am God” (Ps 46, 11). Then, placing at the outset before the retreatant’s eyes the ultimate end of a human being, viz., eternal blessedness, they show him first how far he has strayed from it up until now, and thus engender in him sorrow and hatred for sin. Next, they reveal the beauty of virtue, and by the example of Christ our Lord kindle the desire of imitating him. Finally, they furnish a method for reforming one’s whole life according to the will of God- whether the state of life itself is to be altered or not altered but corrected for the better<sup>39</sup>.

In a nutshell, the crux or the finality or the dynamics of the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* is of two-fold<sup>40</sup>:

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<sup>36</sup> Melloni, J., *Mistagogía de los ejercicios*, M-ST, Bilbao – Santander 2001, 19.

<sup>37</sup> Jacob, P., *Ignatian Discernment*, 18.

<sup>38</sup> Spidlik, T., “Teaching them how to pray in the Exercises”, *CIS 10*, n. 3, (1980), 68.

<sup>39</sup> Official Directory of 1599, n. 8.

<sup>40</sup> Martini, C. M., *Ordenar la propia vida: Meditaciones con los «Ejercicios Espirituales» de san Ignacio*, Narcea, Madrid 1994, 13.

1. **Ascético:** poner al ejercitante en situación de realizar una elección significativa de la vida, con libertad de corazón y con mentalidad evangélica. Es el plano claramente previsto en el texto ignaciano: «*Ejercicios espirituales* para vencer a sí mismo y ordenar su vida, sin determinarse por afección alguna que desordenada sea». (n.21). «Ordenar su vida» no significa simplemente hacer una buena confesión, sino encontrar ese orden especial que supone una elección de vida cualificante y de acuerdo con Dios. Dando a este título una traducción actualizada y positiva, podríamos decir: «Ejercicios espirituales para tomar una decisión transcendental, que ponga en orden la propia vida, superando las limitaciones mundanas y liberándose de los afectos desordenados».

2. **Místico:** que impregna profundamente los Ejercicios y que es como su sustancia, su fundamento, su fuerza secreta y necesaria. Este plano consiste en experimentar y sentir directamente el abrazo con el misterio de Dios y el contacto inmediato con El; en dejarse de verdad tocar por Él.

### 3. Spiritual itinerary (Method and Modality) of the Ignatian *Exercises*

It is important for both the giver and receiver to be aware of the spiritual itinerary and the main objective Ignatian *Exercise* to benefit from them<sup>41</sup>. It is observed that the “itinerario espiritual que va haciendo el ejercitante, de los caminos internos que se le van abriendo y por los que se va iniciando y adentrando en el Misterio de Dios, tal y como es presentando en su libro”<sup>42</sup>. Ignatius wanted individuals to undertake the *Exercises* with the assistance of an experienced spiritual director who would help them shape the retreat and understand what they were experiencing.

The book of the *Spiritual Exercises* is a handbook to be used by the director, not by the person making the retreat. The giver of the *Spiritual Exercises* has a great responsibility. Depending on his or her availability, God will make greater or lesser use of the giver. The figure of the giver is that of a trainer who 1) stimulates, 2) gives method and procedure to find out the will of God and 3) accompanies the exercitant in the entire process. If the receiver goes through the *Exercises* with great zeal and generosity, then one is taken aback by looking the marvels that almighty God can perform in the hearts of people, and the fruits that they can bear in their daily living.

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. García Estébanez, A., “Ejercicios espirituales: método”, *DEI*, 690.

<sup>42</sup> García Estébanez, A., “Ejercicios espirituales: método”, *DEI*, 690.

The basic *Exercises* that Ignatius proposes in all the four weeks of the *Spiritual Exercises* could be grouped as below:

- el Principio y Fundamento [EE 23] o el Preámbulo para hacer elección [EE 169];
- indicaciones introductorias para cada ejercicio en orden a la meditación o contemplación de una hora de duración (las primeras, en [EE 45-54]);
- varias maneras de Anotaciones y Adiciones (por ej. [EE 1-20; 73-90]);
- fórmulas expresas de plegaria [EE 46, 98, 234b];
- introducciones metódicas para varios «modos de orar» [EE 238-260];
- indicaciones para el examen de conciencia [EE 24-43];
- reglas para fines varios, como para ordenarse en el comer [EE 210-217], para hacer elección [EE 184-187], para el discernimiento de espíritus [EE 313-336], para distribuir limosnas [EE 337-344], para sentir y entender escrúpulos [EE 345-351], para el sentido que en la Iglesia debemos tener [EE 352-370]; finalmente una breve lectura sintética de los misterios de Cristo [EE 261-312]<sup>43</sup>.

In order to obtain the greater benefit from these Ignatian *Exercises*, both the giver and receiver of the *Exercises* are expected to have a basic understanding of 1) the Annotations, 2) Ignatius' idea of God, the universe and the human person, 3) disordered affections, and 4) discernment of spirits.

### 3.1 The Annotations [SpEx 1-20]

Annotations are the general guidelines for the method and process or the introductory explanations<sup>44</sup> that mainly give an attitude, a stance in which both the director and the directee ideally approach the retreat of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Most of the 20 annotations highlight the skill required of a director in the *Exercises* i.e. the knowledge and the discipline that is required to give the retreat, whether this is the 30-day enclosed retreat, or whether it is the Annotation [19] retreat, which is the retreat "in the flow of life." Eleven of the annotations [SpEx 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18] are concerned with the giver of the *Exercises*. The other nine [SpEx 1, 3, 4, 5, 11, 13, 16, 19, 20] offer guidelines to the receiver of the *Exercises*. The *Spiritual*

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<sup>43</sup> Remmert, G., “El Diálogo como marco de los ejercicios”, *Man* 48, (1976), 220.

<sup>44</sup> Ganss. G. E., *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius*, 143.

*Exercises* are always adapted or applied to different people, depending on their conditions and situations [SpEx 8; 17; 18-20]. Therefore it is observed that for making authentic Ignatian *Exercises* the following two criteria are absolutely crucial. 1. Deeper understanding the introductory observations and 2. Adapting them to each retreatant's requirements<sup>45</sup>. Hence it is important that the giver of the *Exercises* has to "have thoroughly studied the book of the *Exercises* and have it at his fingertips especially the Annotations and Rules"<sup>46</sup>.

### **3.2 Ignatius' idea of God, the universe and the human person**

Ignatius out of his personal life experience developed his own outlook on God, the created universe, and the role of human persons within it that led him to inspire many others to be seriously concerned with their spiritual growth. "The God of Ignatius is the God who is at work in all things: laboring for the salvation of all as in the Contemplation to Attain Love; working immediately and directly with the exercitant as in Annotations 15 and 16; laboring as Christ the King for the liberation of the world"<sup>47</sup>. Ignatius' world view was firmly based on five chief truths of God's revelation<sup>48</sup>. They are as below:

- God's purpose in creating human beings.
- Their fall from grace through original sin.
- The Incarnation of his Son.
- The Redemption by which Christ restored humankind to God's grace through his life, Passion, and Resurrection.
- The destiny of human kind to eternal salvation, that full satisfaction of each person's capacities and desires in the joy of the beatific vision.

Toward the end of October, 1537, Ignatius decided to travel to Rome accompanied by Faber and Laínez. When they were a few miles away from Rome, in a small Chapel at La Storta, Ignatius had a visitation from God where he was placed with Jesus carrying the Cross

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<sup>45</sup> Jacob, P., *Ignatian Discernment*, 3.

<sup>46</sup> Palmer, M. E., *On Giving the Spiritual Exercises: The Early Jesuit Manuscript Directories and the Official Directory of 1599*, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St Louis 1996, 301.

<sup>47</sup> GC 34, D 26, n. 7.

<sup>48</sup> Ganss, G. E., *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius*, 2.

and God, the Father said to Jesus: “I desire you take this man for your servant”. Jesus then turned to Ignatius and said “It is my will that you serve Us” [the Trinity]. At La Storta, Ignatius received a call to be at the service of Christ’s universal mission in a more definitive manner and labour for the greater glory of God. Thus the vision of La Storta indeed marked the confirmation of the following choices Ignatius made all along his life journey:

- to give himself totally, with the Lord, to the service of the Trinity
- to be with the Lord who was humiliated and suffering
- to live a particular life style of poverty
- to devote himself to service by ‘helping souls’
- to gather companions for the same purpose
- the companions would call themselves the "company of Jesus"<sup>49</sup>.

The following chart<sup>50</sup> traces the gradual growth in Ignatius’ personal knowledge of God as well as his understanding of universal mission.

1.	Place of Experience	Loyola	Cardoner	La Storta
2.	Image of God	King	Center of creation	Trinity
3.	Self -Realization	Soldier	Pilgrim	Mystic
4.	Personal spirituality	Ascetic	Beggar traveler	Missionary
5.	Mission strategies	Personal prayer and mortification	Giving Spiritual Exercises	Any work assigned by the Roman Pontiff
6.	Ultimate vision	Self-perfection	To help souls	All for the greater glory of God (AMDG)

<sup>49</sup> Coleman, G., *Walking with Inigo*, GSP, Anand 2002, 192-193. See also, Alphonso, H., “La Storta” in *DEI*, 1091-1101.

<sup>50</sup> I came across this chart while participating in a course on ‘Ignatian Spirituality’. I regret my inability to acknowledge its source.

Let us now focus on Ignatius' First Companions in whom he successfully instilled the same vigor and commitment for the service of Universal Mission of Christ and the Church<sup>51</sup>. Some historical conclusions prior to the *Deliberatio primorum Patrum* reveals the following:

(1) Ignatius and the “nine friends in our Lord” were a close-knit group who had one common goal in life; (2) Ignatius truly founded the “nine friends” in the evangelical life by way of the *Spiritual Exercises* and Ignatius himself; (3) the continuum of the mystical life of Ignatius ostensibly sprang, at least in intensity, from the illumination beside the Cardoner, and was confirmed by the vision at La Storta pertaining to an apostolic service of the companions who were placed “at the side of Christ”<sup>52</sup>.

In his exhortations to the Jesuits in Cologne in March 1567, Jerome Nadal speaks about his cherished account and interpretation of the La Storta grace:

We ought to have Christ before our eyes as our Leader. For this was shown to our father Ignatius when he was on his way to Rome: he saw God placing him definitively in the service of Christ carrying the cross and saying to him: ‘I shall be with you’, etc. *The very same is our vocation also*, viz., to serve Christ who still bearing his cross – not in himself, but in his Church, for Christ makes his very own the sufferings and persecutions of the Church<sup>53</sup>.

Nadal points out clearly that in the person of Ignatius, all his companions too have been bestowed the same grace of God. It signifies that “all Jesuits have been given by God the Father to Christ bearing his cross as is servants and companions – all Jesuits have been ‘placed with the Son’”<sup>54</sup>.

The *Spiritual Exercises* [SpEx 23] succinctly brings out Ignatius’ conception of God, the universe, and the human person. Ignatius held that all that exists in universe have their origin in God. God is the principle and foundation of everything. In other words, all things proceed from God and all created things serve as means/help by which human persons, who

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<sup>51</sup> For an elaborate study of the missionary activities of the First Jesuits, see O’Malley, J. W., *The First Jesuits*, Harvard University Press, London 1993; Osuna, J., *Amigos en el Señor*; Salvat, I., *Servir en misión universal*, M-ST, Bilbao-Santander 2002.

<sup>52</sup> Orsy, L., “Toward a theological evaluation of communal discernment”, (Dossier ‘Deliberation’ C, Essays on discernment, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed), CIS, Rome (1981), 140-141 (Foot note 2)

<sup>53</sup> MHSI, *Mon. Nadal V*, 789. (Emphasis is mine)

<sup>54</sup> Alphonso, H., *Placed with Christ the Son*, GSP, Anand 1993, 135.

are created by God and for God, will be enabled to attain eternal bliss or redemption by praising, reverencing and serving God here on earth. God is at work [SpEx 236]<sup>55</sup>. Fr Kولvenbach opines that St Ignatius of Loyola was the first in the history of the Christian spirituality who perceived the Trinity as God in action in all things for the salvation of the entire humanity. Thus, St Ignatius was

el primero en la historia de la espiritualidad cristiana que percibió la Trinidad como Dios en acción - como el Dios que sigue trabajando, llenando siempre el universo y despertando activamente la vida divina en todas las cosas para la salvación de la humanidad. Si el monje inspirado contempla, el Ignacio inspirado trabaja-adhiriéndose con todo su corazón a los designios de la Trinidad, ofreciéndose a actuar en sinergia con la Trinidad para que su labor sea para la gloria de la Trinidad<sup>56</sup>.

In and through the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius invites all to give reverence and praise and service to God at all times. In order to do this, according to Ignatius, one has to be deeply aware of his or her disordered affections by striving hard to be indifferent to all created things.

### 3.3 Ignatian Indifference

Ignatius right at the commencement of his book the *Spiritual Exercises* urges the retreatant to strive hard to attain the attitude of indifference in order to profit from spiritual itinerary.

El hombre es criado para alabar, hacer reverencia y servir a Dios nuestro Señor y, mediante esto, salvar su ánima; y las otras cosas sobre la faz de la tierra son criadas para el hombre, y para que le ayuden en la prosecución del fin para que es criado. De donde se sigue, que el hombre tanto ha de usar dellas cuanto le ayudan para su fin y tanto debe quitarse dellas cuanto para ello le impiden. Por lo cual es menester hacemos indiferentes a todas las cosas criadas, en todo lo que es concedido a la libertad de nuestro libre albedrío y no le está prohibido; en tal manera, que no queramos de nuestra parte más salud que enfermedad, riqueza que pobreza, honor que deshonor, vida larga que corta, y por consiguiente en todo lo demás; solamente deseando y eligiendo lo que más nos conduce para el fin que somos criados [SpEx 23]<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>55</sup> García, J. A., "Mi Padre trabaja siempre'. El trabajo de Dios por mí en la contemplación para alcanzar amor", *Man* 68, (1996), 47-60.

<sup>56</sup> Kolvenbach, P.-H., "Ignatius of Loyola: Experience of Christ", in *The Road from La Storta*, California 2000, 23 as cited in Barry, W. A., "Oración ignaciana" in *DEI*, 1373.

<sup>57</sup> I have taken the text of the *Spiritual Exercises* from Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios Espirituales*, Sal Terrae, Santander 2013.

The disposition of indifference allows us to be more disposed and attentive to the inner promptings of the Holy Spirit<sup>58</sup>. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, “para explicar lo que entiende por indiferencia, Ignacio, utiliza la imagen de una balanza bien equilibrada, no inclinándose ni de un lado ni de otro, sino permaneciendo en el medio, como la aguja de una balanza, se trata de dejar "al Criador con la criatura y a la criatura con su Criador y Señor" [EE 15] Y de "seguir aquello que sintiere ser más en gloria y alabanza de Dios nuestro Señor y salvación de mi ánima"[EE. 179]"<sup>59</sup>.

Ordering of one's life is the main focus of the Ignatian *Exercises* [SpEx 2]. The expression 'disordered affections' appears 7 times in the *Exercises* [SpEx 1, 3; SpEx 21,1; Four times during elections SpEx 169, 6; SpEx 172, 2; SpEx 172, 5; SpEx 179, 2; and in SpEx 342, 3)<sup>60</sup>. It is important to note that “the task of ordering one's life progresses from the level of strict moral necessity (opposition to evil) to that of the “more” or “greater” (*magis*) and of a discretion in charity in view of the greater glory of God”<sup>61</sup>. St Paul writing to the Romans says “For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate” (Rom 7, 15). Hence as human persons, we find opposing forces within us in our following of Christ; the two main forces are *sin* and *disordered affections* (First Week). Disordered affections are spontaneous, not generally sinful, but can lead to sin, and go against the Principle and Foundation's main orientation namely to praise, reverence and serve God and thereby promote self-love, self-interest and self-will [SpEx 189]. Initially simple queries such as *Do I do this for love of Christ or for my own love and interest? Is it for Christ or for me?* can be of some help to become aware of our disordered affections. On the long run, one has to cultivate the attitude of indifference (Ignatian indifference is not simply self-renunciation) to all created things in order to rise above ourselves in order to get rid of all the inordinate attachments. The purpose of the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* is to “help us to make ourselves indifferent, i.e., to free ourselves from so many pseudo-problems that only seem important, concentrating instead on the one, single problem: doing God's will. It is an ascetic problem”<sup>62</sup>. During the process of *Exercises* human will learns to collaborate with the divine will. This is indeed the objective of Ignatian discernment.

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. Rovira, J., “La indiferencia” *Man* 8, (1932), 328-329.

<sup>59</sup> Emonet, P., “Indiferencia”, *DEI*, 1016-1017; Rovira, J., “La Indiferencia”, 328.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Echarte, I (ed.), *Concordancia Ignaciana*, 25-26.

<sup>61</sup> Cusson, G., *Biblical Theology and The Spiritual Exercise*, GSP Anand, 1988, 77.

<sup>62</sup> Spidlik, T., “Teaching them how to pray in the Exercises”, *CIS*, 73.

### 3.4 Ignatian Discernment

Spiritual discernment is one of the most prominent themes of Christian spirituality and is also at the heart of the Ignatian spirituality<sup>63</sup> because “in prayer we look for God’s will”<sup>64</sup>. In the words of Father Peter-Hans Kolvenbach:

El discernimiento, en cuanto búsqueda de “lo que agrada a Dios” (Cfr., p.e., Rom 12, 2; Fil 1, 18), es una actitud espiritual constitutiva de toda vida cristiana y tiene un puesto central en la espiritualidad ignaciana<sup>65</sup>.

Ignatius of Loyola is widely known for his practice and propagation of discernment of spirits<sup>66</sup>. Ignatius, starting from the time of his conversion till his death, was always sensitive to the promptings of the spirit of God. So the *Autobiography* is the outcome of a process of personal discernment and decision of Ignatius<sup>67</sup>. Luis Gonçalves da Câmara declared in his prologue to the *Autobiography*: “I have not a word of my own but what I heard from the father”<sup>68</sup>.

God had been imparting on Ignatius many lessons on the movement of the spirits at the time of recovery at Loyola.

La primera experiencia religiosa de Iñigo, en orden su conversión, fue la del discernimiento de espíritus. Así lo atestigua su autobiografía. Y este primer discernimiento tiene su punto de arranque en la lectura del *Vita Christi* y del *Flos Sanctorum* que entretuvo a Iñigo, convaleciente en Loyola de la herida recibida en la defensa militar de Pamplona. Iñigo se sentirá atraído por el ideal de servicio a la persona de Jesucristo, a quien ambos libros presentan como capitán y Rey, modelo al que imitar, centro de toda la creación<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> Futrell, J. C., *El Discernimiento Espiritual*, Sal Terrae, Santander 1984, 7.

<sup>64</sup> Spidlik, T., “Teaching them how to pray in the Exercises”, *CIS*, 73.

<sup>65</sup> Kolvenbach, P.- H., “Indicaciones teóricas sobre el Discernimiento Apostólico en común”, *Selección de Escritos I*, Provincia de España CJ, Madrid 1992, 58.

<sup>66</sup> For a detailed discussion on the terms ‘Discernment of Spirits, See Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, M-ST, Bilbao-Santander 2009, 587-752; Toner, J. J., *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius's rules for the Discernment of spirits*, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St Louis 1982; Ruiz Jurado, M., *El discernimiento espiritual: teología, historia, práctica*, BAC, Madrid 1994; Buckley, M. J., “Discernimiento”, *DEI*, 607-611; “El Discernimiento ignaciano, Actitudes, autoengaños, prácticas”, *Man* 82, (2010) [The entire issue].

<sup>67</sup> Rambla, J. M., *El Peregrino*, 15. See 6th edition the of this book, Rambla, J. M., *El Peregrino*, M-ST-UPComillas, Bilbao – Santander - Madrid 2015.

<sup>68</sup> See Prólogo del P. Camara, 3, note 4. Rambla, J. M., *El Peregrino*, 146.

<sup>69</sup> Salvat, I., *Servir en misión. Aportación al estudio de carisma de Ignacio y de las Constituciones*, CIS Roma 1972, 3.

Ignatius narrates [Au 6-10] in a lucid manner about his awareness of the movements of different spirits and their immediate effect.

Había todavía esta diferencia: que cuando pensaba en aquello del mundo, se deleitaba mucho; mas cuando después de cansado lo dejaba, hallábase seco y descontento; y cuando en ir a Jerusalén descalzo, y en no comer sino hierbas, y en hacer todos los demás rigores que veía haber hecho los santos; no solamente se consolaba cuando estaba en los tales pensamientos, más aun después de dejado, quedaba contento y alegre. Mas no miraba en ello, ni se paraba a ponderar esta diferencia, hasta en tanto que una vez se le abrieron un poco los ojos, y empezó a maravillarse desta diversidad y a hacer reflexión sobre ella, cogiendo por experiencia que de unos pensamientos quedaba triste y de otros alegre, y poco a poco viniendo a conocer la diversidad de los espíritus (10) que se agitaban, el uno del demonio, y el otro de Dios. [Este fué el primero discurso que hizo en las cosas de Dios; y después cuando hizo los ejercicios, de aquí comenzó a tomar lumbre para lo de la diversidad de espíritus] [Au 8].

This was the first lesson Ignatius acquired about the interior movements of spirits, the building block of the discernment. At the beginning of the *Autobiography*, Ignatius mentioned that he “did not dwell on any interior thing” [Au 14] and that “he had no knowledge of spiritual matters” [Au 21]. During his stay at Manresa, Ignatius

Slowly came to the realization that he was being stirred by opposite spirits; one was from God and the other from the demon. The acceptance of these opposite spirits at work in our hearts is the first step on the way to discernment. For Inigo this was a momentous discovery, that there was something outside of him that could affect him and later his thoughts and feelings; he was not totally in control. He was learning how God touches us at the core of our being, and that we become aware of this from our thoughts and our feelings. This awareness of the interior movements of spirits, followed by the ability to discern became the basis for discovering God’s genuine call to him<sup>70</sup>.

It was during the great illumination at Manresa, Ignatius felt that he received a decisive insight into spiritual matters and about his interior life. Ignatius clearly “understood much more about the methodology of discernment and the role of consolation as a conformation of discernment process”<sup>71</sup>. Here Ignatius used the word “understanding” for about four times highlighting that it was “so great an enlightenment”; the eyes of understanding “began to be opened” and “the things of God that he had meditated upon and read about [Au 26]. It was at this stage of his life, Ignatius felt more intimately that God was teaching him like a school master [Au 27]. It is evident from the study of his *Autobiography* that Ignatius was gradually

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<sup>70</sup> Coleman, G., *Walking with Inigo*, 17.

<sup>71</sup> Coleman, G., *Walking with Inigo*, 66-67.

overcoming his will by being receptive to God's dealings with him, allowing God's will to conquer his entire being through the process of discernment of spirits<sup>72</sup>.

Studying the *Autobiography* of Ignatius, one can clearly notice that Ignatius had a strong element of self-will in his plans and action<sup>73</sup>. Ignatius was initially narcissist<sup>74</sup>. However, God was gradually helping him all along his pilgrimage especially at Manresa<sup>75</sup> to conquer his self-love, self-will and self-interest [SpEx 189] and thus become a person of prayer and the discernment of spirits<sup>76</sup>. What is most laudable in Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* is that "he has not developed a full-fledged 'theory' or abstract model of discernment. He has only formulated and proposed some practical principles and imaginatively expressed their dynamics. The experience gained in the practice of discernment makes one only a more skillful discerner; and not necessarily a theoretician producing theories and models of discernment"<sup>77</sup>.

Maurice Dullard writes:

In his Autobiography, we watch Ignatius living out the rules he formulated and placed at the heart of his Spiritual Exercises since those Exercises are basically a methodology of discernment. Ignatius does not impose his own experience of God or prayer on us. Rather he gives us methodology he evolved so that we can discern the direction God is leading us. We too can seek and find God in proportion to our transcending our own self-love, self-will and self-interest (SpEx 189.10)<sup>78</sup>.

The notion of Ignatian discernment is mainly concerned with the inner movements of the spirits in the individual. In a well-written article on 'Ignatian Discernment', the author John Carroll Futrell points out the following:

Discernment involves choosing the way of the light of Christ instead of the way of the Evil One and living out the consequences of this choice through discerning what specific decisions and

<sup>72</sup> Melloni, J., "Cardoner", *DEI*, 282.

<sup>73</sup> "As a young man he is constantly getting caught up in unrealistic ambitions, and not even the sobering experience of a shattered leg can break the spell that holds him captive. But some accidental reading reveals to him the true object of his quest: it is Christ, who alone is worthy of absolute loyalty and can satisfy the loftiest aspirations-in a way that is not self-centred but out-going". Cf Divarkar, R. P., *A Pilgrim's Testament; The Memoirs of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St Louis 1995, 3.

<sup>74</sup> Meissner, W.W., *Ignatius of Loyola, The Psychology of a Saint*, Yale University Press, London 1992, 339.

<sup>75</sup> Arroyo, J., "La Congregación General de la Compañía de Jesús, como Compañía en discernimiento", *Man* 55 (1983), 212. "Es una idea bastante común entre los autores históricos, que en la experiencia espiritual de Manresa recibió Ignacio el don de discernimiento, que le acompañó toda su vida".

<sup>76</sup> Domínguez M, C., "Ignacio de Loyola a la luz del Psicoanálisis", *Proyección* 53 (2006), 33-36.

<sup>77</sup> Lobo, J., "Discernment as a Hermeneutical Process: An interdisciplinary study", *Ignis* XLIII, n. 1, (2013), 35-70.

<sup>78</sup> Dullard, M., in the preface to the book of Pierre Jacob, *Ignatian Discernment*, XV-XVI.

actions are demanded to follow Christ here and now. The *diakrisis pneumaton* – discernment of spirits- is a ‘sifting through’ of interior experiences in order to determine their origin and to discover which ones are movements toward the following the way of light<sup>79</sup>.

In order to facilitate the greater awareness about the interior movements of the spirits, Ignatius presents to us two series of Rules for the Discernment in the *Spiritual Exercises*.

- Rules for the Discernment of spirits (First week); [SpEx 313-327]<sup>80</sup>
- Rules for the Discernment of spirits (Second week); [SpEx 328-336]<sup>81</sup>

The Ignatian discernment specially the ‘Rules’ for the discernment<sup>82</sup> have their roots in teaching of the fathers of the Church<sup>83</sup> as well as in the New Testament, especially the Pauline and Johannine writings (Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor 1:7 3:4; Gal. 5:13-26; 1 Thess. 5:19, 1 Jn 4:2-3). What is the particular contribution of Ignatian discernment? The specific contribution of Ignatius was “his focusing upon the dynamic process of discernment as directed to the ceaseless response of a man in his whole life and in all of his actions to God’s word to him in every concrete situation”<sup>84</sup>. Therefore, the *Spiritual Exercises* that Ignatius completed around 1541 are of great help for anyone who desires to seek and to do God’s will. “Los Ejercicios Espirituales de Ignacio de Loyola forman al ejercitante para el discernimiento y en el discernimiento”<sup>85</sup>. Hence, in the opinion of Tomas Spidlik, the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits of the *Spiritual Exercises* are to be considered as a way of prayer.

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<sup>79</sup> Futrell, J. C., “Ignatian Discernment”, *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 2, (1970), 47.

<sup>80</sup> The content of these fourteen rules can be summed up briefly as below:

“Title [313] Preliminary principles (Rules 1 and 2) Descriptive definitions of consolation and desolation (Rules 3 and 4) Ways of dealing with desolation (Rules 5 to 8) Why the experience of desolation? (Rule 9) Attitudes towards consolation (Rules 10 and 11) some common tactics of the enemy (Rules 12 to 14)”. Cf Ivens, M., *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, Gracewing-Inigo Enterprises, Herefordshire-Surrey1998, 209.

<sup>81</sup> The brief summary of these 8 rules are as follows:

“Title, Opening principle (Rule 1) Consolation without preceding cause (Rule 2) Distinction between ‘without cause’ and ‘with cause’ (Rule 3) Possible deception in ‘consolation with cause’ (Rules 4, 5, 6) Action of the spirits in relation to the orientation of the person (Rule 7) Deception in the afterglow of consolation without cause (Rule 8)”. Ivens, M., *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, 227.

<sup>82</sup> Here I don’t intend to discuss about the Rules for discernment in depth. For a detailed discussion on the terms ‘Discernment of Spirits, See Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, 587-752; Toner, J. J., *A Commentary on Saint Ignatius’s rules for the Discernment of spirits*; Buckley, M. J., “Discernimiento” DEI, 607-611.

<sup>83</sup> Rahner, H., *Ignatius the Theologian*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1990, 165-80.

<sup>84</sup> Futrell, J. C., “Ignatian Discernment”, in CIS, Dossier ‘Deliberatio’ C, Rome (1981), 90.

<sup>85</sup> Garcia-Monge, J. A., “Estructura antropológica del discernimiento espiritual”, *Man* 61, (1989), 137.

The Exercises describe a number of ways of praying, but the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits are not usually included among them. Yet I feel that those rules are essential if we are to understand what mental prayer is all about<sup>86</sup>.

Ignatius' rules for the discernment definitely stem from his own God experience, both the personal experience of his conversion- and his experience in guiding his companions and others. Their importance in the *Exercises*, as well as the need to apply them appropriately is established in the Annotations [SpEx 8-9]; the two movements they deal with are of central significance in the prayer of the *Exercises* from the first day onwards [SpEx 62] and especially [SpEx 176] highlight the value and importance of these rules and at the same time the utmost need of appropriate application of them<sup>87</sup>.

Commenting on the Rules of Discernment in the *Spiritual Exercises*, Pierre Jacob says that the Title of the Rule of Discernment [SpEx 313], clearly points out the three steps in the dynamics of Discernment. They are as follows:

The Rules “Teach a person how to trace the consolation and desolation in his feelings, and how to get in touch with them (313 [1])... how to understand these feelings and the thoughts or projects linked with them; how to perceive what they mean and where they tend, that is their dynamic relationship to the end (313 [2])... teach the retreatant to reflect on what these states are doing to him in terms of taking him towards God or taking him away from God. Finally they invite him to take a stand in the light of the end. (313 [3], 139)<sup>88</sup>.

To Pierre Jacob, taking a stand here would mean that “the exercitant rejects what tends to take a person away from God and accepts what takes him/her towards God”<sup>89</sup>. ‘Discernment’, the most significant Ignatian theme, runs through all the inspirational sources of our Jesuit Charism<sup>90</sup>.

‘Ejercicios’, Compañía y ‘Constituciones’ están acuñadas por una experiencia común, en un ambiente hondamente espiritual: es decir, la experiencia de continua oración, y el análisis de las mociones de espíritus, que, discernidas con temperamento rico, fino, organizador y sabio, orientan las vías de las continuas elecciones necesarias al Fundador<sup>91</sup>.

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<sup>86</sup> Spidlik, T., “Teaching them how to pray in the Exercises”, *CIS*, 68.

<sup>87</sup> Ivens, M, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, 205.

<sup>88</sup> Jacob, P., *Ignatian Discernment*, 18-19.

<sup>89</sup> Jacob, P., *Ignatian Discernment*, 19.

<sup>90</sup> Pieri, F., *Pablo e Ignacio; testigos y maestros del discernimiento espiritual*, Sal Terrae, Santander 2005, 81-190.

<sup>91</sup> Arroyo, J., “La Congregación General de la Compañía de Jesús, como Compañía en discernimiento”, 212.

It is good note that the main purpose of all the proposals made by Ignatius in the *Constitutions*<sup>92</sup> is to help every Jesuit to be a “man of discernment” by the *grace of God’s Spirit*.<sup>93</sup>

A lo largo de las Constituciones puso juntos la iniciativa divina anterior y el discernimiento humano posterior, manteniendo de continuo en una u otra formulación que “esto sola la unción del Spirito Sancto pueda enseñarlo, y la prudencia que Dios nuestro Señor comunica a los que en su divina Majestad confían, a lo menos avisos que ayuden y dispongan para el efecto que ha de hacer la gracia divina” [Co 414]; este mismo énfasis en la acción divina al enseñar el discernimiento aparece también en otros pasajes de las Constituciones (Co 134. 161. 219.624])<sup>94</sup>.

In summary, we could say that “el discernimiento de espíritus no es lección que se aprende como la física o la historia. La iniciativa es de Dios. Dios es el uno que se comunica a la su ánima devota abrazándola en su amor y alabanza y disponiéndola por la vía que mejor podrá servirle adelante”<sup>95</sup>. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius with simple terms and formulas “pone al hombre ante el problema de la vida: que es el de *discernir* en cada momento la voluntad de Dios, para cumplir personalmente su propio fin y para que, por medio de él, alcancen también su fin todas las criaturas que le rodean”<sup>96</sup> [SpEx 23]; (Rom 8, 20-22).

#### 4. Forms of prayer in the Ignatian *Exercises*

Jerome Nadal defined the Ignatian *Exercises* as “un cierto método de oración”<sup>97</sup>. Ignatian *Exercises* is certainly made according to an order and following a method. However, “los Ejercicios no son un manual de oración metódica. Ignacio lanza al ejercitante a la oración sin haberle dado un tratado ni siquiera mínimo, sobre ella y sus formas. Quizá en esto se refleja,

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<sup>92</sup> “El ‘libro de los Ejercicios’ revela un encendido de amor en el alma, una respuesta inefable a la llamada de Dios y un seguimiento enamorado de la persona y reino de Cristo. La Voluntad de la “mayor gloria de Dios” y “del mejor servicio” a su causa, de una manera eficazmente operativa y estructural, abre la puerta a la aventura de una Orden religiosa nueva, que nace abrazada al atractivo de Jesús, y embarcada con El en la voluntad del Padre. Para esta compañía elabora Ignacio, ayudado de alguna manera por todos sus Compañeros, el ‘Libro de las Constituciones.’”- Arroyo, J., “La Congregación General de la Compañía de Jesús, como Compañía en discernimiento”, 212.

<sup>93</sup> Palmés C., *Del discernimiento a la obediencia Ignaciana*, CIS, Rome 1988, 47.

<sup>94</sup> Buckley, M. J., “Discernimiento”, *DEI*, 611.

<sup>95</sup> Buckley, M. J., “Discernimiento”, *DEI*, 611.

<sup>96</sup> Arrupe, P., *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, Sal Terrae, Santander 1981, 483.

<sup>97</sup> MI, FN 11, 241.

una vez más, su talento práctico: a orar se aprende orando. Pone al ejercitante al calor de la oración y éste, metido en ella, sin darse cuenta, aprende a orar”<sup>98</sup>. Let us now briefly examine some of the forms of prayer that Ignatius proposes in the *Spiritual Exercises* namely Meditation, Contemplation, and the *Examination of Consciousness*<sup>99</sup>.

#### 4.1 Ignatian Meditation

Meditation engages human thought, imagination, emotion, as well as desire. This utilization of faculties is indispensable in order to deepen our convictions of Christian faith, prompt the conversion of heart, and make stronger our will to know, love and follow Christ. One could meditate on the mysteries of Christ using the lectio divina or the rosary. Though this form of prayerful reflection is highly beneficial, the Christian prayer should seek the knowledge of the love of Jesus and finally union with him<sup>100</sup>. Meditation is one of the effective means to experience union with God.

Already in the first annotation of the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius makes a mention of meditation: “todo modo de examinar la conciencia, de meditar, de contemplar, de orar vocal y mental y de otras espirituales operaciones...” [SpEx 1]. The main exercises that Ignatius proposes to the exercitant during the first week of the *Exercises* are undoubtedly meditations as we can easily figure out by their titles: “A meditation on three powers of the soul” [SpEx 45], “A meditation on our own sins” [SpEx 55] and “A meditation on hell” [SpEx 65].

What does Ignatius understand by mediation? Meditation<sup>101</sup> from the Ignatian point of view is “un estilo de oración que pretende poner a *toda la persona* en relación con Dios profundizando en algún pasaje evangélico o en algún tema de la fe. Cuando Ignacio se refiere a toda la persona nos habla de tres dimensiones que la totalizan: la *memoria* (recuerdos, sentimientos...), el *entendimiento* (inteligencia, lógica, comprensión) y la *voluntad* (capacidad

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<sup>98</sup> Tejera, M., “Ejercicios algo más que un manual de oración metódica”, *Man* 61, (1989), 91.

<sup>99</sup> For a more detailed study forms of prayer in the *Spiritual Exercises*, see *Man* 61, (1989), 91-195; *Man* 65, (1993), 5-88; *Man* 81, (2009), 101-190; Fleming, D. L, *Like the lightning*, St Louis, Missouri 2004, 51-61.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. CCC 2705-2708.

<sup>101</sup> See Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio. Historia y análisis*, 129-131, Calveras, J., “Meditación con las tres potencias”, *Man* 8 (1932), 193-209; Granero, J. M. “La meditación ignaciana”, *Man* 41 (1969), 255-264.

de decisión, de entrega, de afecto)”.<sup>102</sup> The Ignatian meditation is a human activity where all three human faculties operate simultaneously<sup>103</sup>. In brief, we could say that

De cualquier manera que se entienda la meditación ignaciana, ésta se experimenta solamente en su contexto: Dios, que es el primero, trabaja directamente con cada ejercitante incluso cuando éste aplica la memoria, el entendimiento y la voluntad. Dios puede transformar una meditación natural en una experiencia sobrenatural de Jesucristo como Señor<sup>104</sup>.

## 4.2 Ignatian Contemplation

Generally speaking, the contemplative prayer is considered to be the prototype of the affective prayer. It is also called “prayer of the heart” in order to make a clear distinction between vocal and mental prayer. Contemplative prayer, however, as a gift and grace, is the simplest expression of the mystery of prayer. Contemplative prayer is also primarily an intense time of prayer. The contemplation “es una forma de orar que ayuda a entrar en una manera intuitiva e imaginativa en un determinado texto. Es una manera muy apropiada para conocer por dentro lo que se quiere contemplar”<sup>105</sup>.

In the Christian tradition, however, contemplation is closely united with humanity of Christ who is the revealed access to God, the Father. The contemplative prayer is centred on the person of Jesus as depicted in the Gospel narratives<sup>106</sup>. “Contemplar es, para el Cristiano, “mirar y considerar” las diferentes escenas de la vida de Jesús transmitidas por los Evangelios”<sup>107</sup>. In other words, to contemplate “es mirar con el corazón a la persona de Jesús”<sup>108</sup>. Contemplation is basically a gaze of faith, fixed on Jesus. Contemplative prayer, according to the teaching of the Church, is hearing the Word of God, is silence and is a union with the prayer of Christ leading us to partake in his mystery which is celebrated by the Church in the holy Eucharist. Finally it is the Holy Spirit that makes our contemplative prayer fruitful

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<sup>102</sup> Borrás, P., *Orar con San Ignacio de Loyola*, 14.

<sup>103</sup> Tetlow, A. J., “Meditación”, *DEI*, 1206.

<sup>104</sup> Tetlow, A. J., “Meditación”, *DEI*, 1211.

<sup>105</sup> Borrás, P., *Orar con San Ignacio de Loyola*, 16.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Guillén, A. T., “Contemplación”, *DEI*, 445.

<sup>107</sup> Guillén, A. T., “Contemplación”, *DEI*, 445.

<sup>108</sup> De la Hormaza, M. L., “La contemplación ignaciana, camino de encuentro”, *Man* 81, (2009), 115.

in action. In other words, it is through contemplation, we learn the interior knowledge of our Lord, the more to love him and follow

In the *Spiritual Exercises*, one of the reasons why Ignatius prescribes contemplative prayer is precisely to put the retreatant in contact with the humanity of Jesus, “que por mí se ha hecho hombre” [SpEx 104].

La oración de contemplación consiste en mirar con el corazón y esto lleva a amar lo que se contempla: Jesús de Nazaret. Jesús se nos revela en lo más profundo de nuestro ser, se nos manifiesta sin que nuestros discursos, pensamientos, ideologías manipulen su imagen; Dios se deja ver, tocar, escuchar al considerar la persona de Jesús. Es como un puente que une el misterio de un Dios que se ha hecho carne, humanidad y nuestra cotidianeidad, nuestra humanidad actual, nuestra historia concreta y personal. Nos lleva a un seguimiento cercano y entregado de aquel que “nos amó hasta el extremo” (Jn 13,1). Es un modo de orar “para más seguir e imitar al Señor (Ej 109), “para amarle y seguirle más” (Ej 104)<sup>109</sup>.

In the Ignatian contemplation, for that matter, in any contemplative prayer, God himself is the guide. The subject who contemplates has to enter into the contemplation “con grande ánimo y liberalidad con su Creador y Señor” [SpEx 5] and with deep awareness that “no el mucho saber harta y satisfice al ánima, más el sentir y gustar de las cosas internamente” [SpEx 2] because God himself communicates with us in contemplation “como un amigo habla a otro” [SpEx 54].

In contrast to the Ignatian meditation, the retreatant is more passive than active during the Ignatian contemplation. Ignatian contemplation is a type of prayer that “engages the whole person and all one’s powers” namely applying the senses, feelings, memory, imagination [SpEx 66-71, 121-126]<sup>110</sup>. The fruitfulness of the contemplation during the Ignatian *Exercises* ultimately depends on the receptivity of the person. Hence some consider Ignatian contemplation as an attitude more than a prayer method<sup>111</sup>.

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<sup>109</sup> De la Hormaza, M<sup>a</sup> L., “La contemplación ignaciana, camino de encuentro”, 116. “El acceso al Misterio de Cristo Jesús -al secreto último de su vida se hace a través de la contemplación de los misterios de su vida muerte-resurrección. Misterios que se van contemplando a lo largo de la Segunda, Tercera y Cuarta Semana”: García Estébanez, A., “Ejercicios espirituales: método”, *DEI*, 692.

<sup>110</sup> Lonsdale, D., *Eyes to see, ears to hear*, 115-116.

<sup>111</sup> García Estébanez, A., “Ejercicios espirituales: método”, *DEI*, 692.

Along with meditation and contemplation, Ignatius all through his life practiced the discernment of Spirits and the *Examination of Consciousness* as well as propagated the same in the book of *Spiritual Exercises*. Ignatius out of his own personal experience came to know *Examen of Consciousness* to get rid of his self-love, self-will and self-interests and thus grow in God-consciousness<sup>112</sup>.

#### 4.3 Ignatian *Examen*

Former Jesuit General Pedro Arrupe wrote that the Ignatian *Examen* “es una exigencia en la Compañía. ¿Cuántos jesuitas hacen hoy el examen de conciencia? No lo sé, pero muchos han abandonado el hacerlo frecuentemente”<sup>113</sup>. For many, the Ignatian *Examen* is “usually the first practice to disappear from the daily life of the religious” observed George Aschenbrenner in his well-known article called ‘Consciousness Examen’<sup>114</sup>. Sheer meaningless routine<sup>115</sup> will probably be the response of some Jesuits to the question; ‘What is your take on the *Examination of Conscience*?’. Some others are of the opinion that the practice of the Ignatian *Examen* is “largely an experience of morbidity; death-dealing and not life-enhancing”<sup>116</sup>. This type of negative experience of the Ignatian *Examen* is the outcome of an inadequate understanding of the practice of *Examen*. In the Ignatian *Examen* “no se trata tanto de conocer nuestras faltas cuanto de ponernos en estado de discernir en todo momento la voluntad de Dios”<sup>117</sup>. T. Spidlik strongly felt:

The crisis of the examination of conscience comes from the fact that we do not consider it a genuine and important kind of prayer. Perhaps we have been using it too much to build character, rather than a means for contemplation... God works and lets himself be seen in our daily life<sup>118</sup>.

The exercise of the *Examen of conscience*, is indeed the result of Ignatius’ faithfulness to the practice of prayer in his daily living. In the *Examen* “no se trata solamente de retirarse

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<sup>112</sup> See the article of Aschenbrenner, G. A., “Consciousness Examen” *Review for Religious* 31, 1, (1972), 14-2.

<sup>113</sup> Arrupe, P., *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, 233.

<sup>114</sup> Aschenbrenner, G. A., “Consciousness Examen”, 14.

<sup>115</sup> See Alphonso, H., *The Personal Vocation: Transformation in Depth through the Spiritual Exercises*, CIS, Rome 1990, 63.

<sup>116</sup> Townsend, D. K., “The Examen Re-examined”, CIS, (1987), 12.

<sup>117</sup> Arrupe, P., *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, 234.

<sup>118</sup> Spidlik, T., “Teaching them how to pray in the Exercises”, CIS, 72.

durante dos cuartos de hora. 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”<sup>119</sup>. In the words of Ribadeneyra:

He [Ignatius] has always kept this habit of examining his conscience every hour and of asking himself with careful attention how he had passed the hour. If at the end of it he happened upon some more important matter, or a task which prevented this pious practice, he postponed the Examen, but at the first free moment, or the following hour, he made up for this delay<sup>120</sup>.

Ignatian *Examen*, a time of prayer, is an important tool to augment our God consciousness or awareness. Luís Gonçalves da Câmara closes the *Autobiography* of Ignatius with the following words:

He said he was quite sure that he had not exaggerated; and that, although he had committed many offenses against Our Lord after he began to serve him, he had never consented to mortal sin. Rather, he had always grown in devotion, that is, ease in finding God, and now more than ever in his whole life. Every time, any hour, that he wished to find God, he found him [Au 99].

It becomes evident while going through the *Autobiography* of Ignatius that the *Examen* was an important spiritual tool which Ignatius made use of on daily basis to be in touch with God’s spirit. The mature Ignatius almost towards the fag end of his life was able to find God whenever and wherever he wished to do so. This was possible mainly because of his faithfulness to the daily practice of *Examen*.

#### **4.3.1 Ignatian Examen in the *Spiritual Exercises*<sup>121</sup>**

At the outset, it is good be aware of the genesis or originality of the practice of *Examen* of conscience. Ignatius is not the author of this exercise. However, Ignatius indeed popularized the practice of *Examen* through his book the *Spiritual Exercises*. The practice of *Examen* of

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<sup>119</sup> Arrupe, P., *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, 234.

<sup>120</sup> De Guibert, J., *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice, A Historical Study*. The Institute of Jesuit Sources, St. Louis 1964, 66.

<sup>121</sup> In the *Spiritual Exercises*, the *Examination of Conscience*, apart from [24-43], appears in the following places: “The First Method of Prayer [238-47]. The reflection after prayer [77] is a kind of *Examen*, and the theme of examination appears again in the Rules for Discernment [319, 333, 334]”: Ivens, M., *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, 33. (Foot note 28).

*conscience* can be traced back to many traditions. The desert fathers and mothers, Stoic philosophers, prominent Zen masters, several mystic and monastic ascetics were the ardent practitioners of *Examen*<sup>122</sup>. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius presents to us two types of *Examen* namely 1. Particular *Examen* [SpEx 24-31] and 2. General *Examen* [SpEx 32-42].

#### **4.3.1.1 The Particular *Examen of Conscience* [SpEx 24-31]**

There are three different times of the day and two examinations involved in the practice of the Particular *Examen of conscience* [SpEx 24-26]. The primary objective of the Particular Examen is to eliminate all the sins or defects and thus make oneself more docile to the will / action of God in one's life. The objective is particular which signifies that one has to examine one's conduct keeping in mind the ultimate aim of this exercise i.e. to make progress in the Christian life; progress not only in one's individual life but also in one's social relations and commitment<sup>123</sup>. The four additional directions [SpEx 27-31] are precisely indications so that the person is attentive to the action of God throughout the day<sup>124</sup>. Ignatius proposes these additional directions as help to more ready removal of the particular sin or guilt.

#### **4.3.1.2 The General *Examen of Conscience* [SpEx 32-42]**

As Ignatius puts it: “the purpose of this *examination of conscience* is to purify the soul and to aid us to improve our confessions” [32]. Ignatius says that there are three kinds of thought processes in the mind of a person, namely: one which is strictly one’s own, and arises wholly from one’s own freewill; two others come from without, the one from the good spirit, and the other from the evil one [32]. The general *Examen of conscience* covers the following three major spheres of human person.

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<sup>122</sup> See Chércoles, A. M<sup>a</sup> /Rambla, J. M<sup>a</sup>, “Examen de Conciencia”, *DEI*, 841; Tetlow J. A., “The Examen of Particulars”, *Review for Religious* 56, n. 3, (1997), 230. The latest book on the Ignatian examen, see Santos, A.A., *Mas él, examinándolo bien* (Au 27): el examen de conciencia en la espiritualidad ignaciana, M-ST- UPComillas, Bilbao-Santander-Madrid, 2016.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Chércoles, A. M<sup>a</sup> /Rambla, J. M<sup>a</sup>, “Examen de Conciencia”, *DEI*, 843.

<sup>124</sup> Rambla, J. M<sup>a</sup>, “Ejercicios espirituales de San Ignacio de Loyola; Una lectura del texto (II)”, *EIDES*, No 63, 2011, 18.

- **Thoughts [SpEx 33-37]**

The thought of sinning mortally or committing a venial sin merit from evil thoughts that come from without. This functions as an introduction for discernment of spirits that presupposes the capacity of an individual “for understanding to some extent the different movements produced in the soul and for recognizing those that are good to admit them, and those that are bad, to reject them” [313].

- **Words [SpEx 38-41]**

Ignatius divides into three parts. “No swear” [38-39], “No idle words” [40] and “No lying, false testimony and detraction [41]. Ignatius in a lucid manner states: “Those who are perfect should be allowed to swear by a creature rather than those who are imperfect. The perfect, due to constant contemplation and the enlightenment of the understanding, consider, mediate, and ponder more that God our Lord is in every creature by His essence, power and presence” [39]. Here, Ignatius is gradually situating the imperfect exercitant in the horizon of contemplation to obtain love where the creator dwells and labours in all created things [234-237]<sup>125</sup>.

- **Deeds [SpEx 42]**

To Ignatius, the subject matter for examination about one’s deeds will be the Ten Commandments, the laws of the Church, the recommendations of superiors. It is deemed that here Ignatius is proposing something that is totally new, radical and urgent for a modern society that seems to value and glorify narcissism<sup>126</sup>.

#### **4.3.1.3 The Five-Point Method for Making The General *Examen* [SpEx 43]**

Ignatius has proposed a method<sup>127</sup> for making the general *examination of conscience*. The five points of which Ignatius prescribes in his book the *Spiritual Exercises* are the following;

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<sup>125</sup> Rambla, J. M<sup>a</sup>, “Ejercicios espirituales de San Ignacio de Loyola; Una lectura del texto (II)”, 20.

<sup>126</sup> Chércoles, A. M<sup>a</sup> /Rambla, J. M<sup>a</sup>, “Examen de Conciencia” in *DEI*, 849.

<sup>127</sup> “The five steps of the exercise of Examen are to be seen, and gradually experienced in faith, as dimensions of the Christian consciousness, formed by God and His work in the heart as it confronts and grows within this world

- *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.

These five steps proposed by Ignatius are some kind of help to enrich the God consciousness in the daily living<sup>128</sup>. If the *Examen* is practiced for the sake of the religious obligation without understanding the chief purpose of the Ignatian *Exercises*, then the end result would be that over a period of time the *Examen* might shrink into “a quick, superficial reflection over the day, and the five traditional elements of the *Examen* thus collapse into the third element by itself-a general survey of the day’s activities”<sup>129</sup>. Ignatius formulated this five-step method of making daily *Examen* not just to facilitate a quick thinking-over of the day. Instead Ignatius intended that the *Examen* could be a prayer in which the person chiefly savours God’s love, the gratitude stems out of a sinner at peace with a tremendous awareness that s/he can do on his/her own. The Ignatian *Examen* is a time for wonderfully learning how God’s love turns everything to good even his/her own sinfulness. Ignatius certainly practiced the *Examen* with this type of positive attitude and purpose in mind.

The *Examen* remains to be one of the powerful means to find God in all things and all things in God and thus the practice of the *Examen* contributes greatly to live a life enveloped

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and all of reality” See Aschenbrenner, G. A., “Consciousness Examen”, 16. Ignatius has proposed a method (The Five-Point Method [SpEx 43]) for making the general examination of conscience. The five steps proposed by Ignatius are some kind of help to enrich the God consciousness in the daily living. “The five steps of the exercise of Examen are to be seen, and gradually experienced in faith, as dimensions of the Christian consciousness, formed by God and His work in the heart as it confronts and grows within this world and all of reality”: Aschenbrenner, G. A., “Consciousness Examen”, 16.

<sup>128</sup> Over the years we see that many Jesuits and others have adopted this Ignatian method to enhance spiritual life of people. “The five-point Examen given in the Spiritual Exercises is meant for beginners, that is, for those going through the *ejercicios leves*, the brief simple exercises of Annotation 18. The Examen of those who are more practiced, Aschenbrenner proposed, reached into the discernment of spirits. After that development the Examen as an exercise continued to expand: Anthony De Mello designed some Gestalt practices to help self-examination. John English, in the “awareness Examen,” accommodated the Examen to the way people currently perceive the self”: Tetlow J. A., “The Examen of Particulars”, 231.

<sup>129</sup> Aschenbrenner, G. A., “A check on our availability; The Examen” *Review for Religious* 39, n. 3, (1980), 322.

by the gracious presence of God. Hence Ignatius very much insisted<sup>130</sup> that all Jesuits make the *Examen of conscience* twice a day [Co 342] as it is a time of prayer.

Ignatian *Examen* enhances our daily spiritual discernment. The Ignatian *exercise* of the *Examen of conscience* has to be looked at in the context of discernment of spirits because “la actividad básica de la persona de discernimiento, la infraestructura que sustenta todos los demás procesos de discernimiento, no es otra que el “examen” ignaciano”<sup>131</sup>. The practice of daily *Examen* will help us to gradually cultivate or develop a discerning heart. In the words of Aschenbrenner:

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 -- a most important one as Solomon realized (1 Kings 3:9-12). So 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 development<sup>132</sup>.

The *Examen* brings the discernment of spirits into daily life when one begins to ask him/herself where s/he has responded or neglected to respond to God’s unconditional love rather than focusing extensively or making a list of right or wrong actions. *Examination of Conscience*, if practiced daily as a form of prayer, would certainly help us to grow day by day in our God consciousness and thus cultivate a discerning heart as “la oración, el discernimiento y la elección son, pues, realidades que tienen mucho que ver con el examen”<sup>133</sup>. Hence Father Pedro Arrupe strongly recommended the practice of the Ignatian *Examen* and exhorted the Jesuits to faithfully practice it.

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. Nuestro espíritu de oración se renueva constantemente con su práctica. Y no exige mucho tiempo. Pero además debemos esforzarnos en reservar un tiempo formal para el examen. No olvidemos lo que decía S. Ignacio: "Podrá faltar tiempo para la meditación, pero no para el examen"<sup>134</sup>.

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<sup>130</sup> “Over the centuries Jesuits have kept recalling, as a dictum of St. Ignatius, that even if one is too sick to meditate one does not omit the daily Examen of conscience.”: Tetlow J. A., “The Examen of Particulars”, 230.

<sup>131</sup> Townsend, D. K., “The Examen Re-examined”, 11; Mollá, D., “El discernimiento, realidad humana y espiritual”, *Man* 82, (2010), 13.

<sup>132</sup> Aschenbrenner, G. A., “Consciousness Examen”, 16.

<sup>133</sup> Cebollada, P., “El examen ignaciano. Revisión y equilibrio personal”, *Man* 81, (2009), 127.

<sup>134</sup> Arrupe, P., *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, 234.

## 5. Methods of praying in the Ignatian Exercises

We come across the Ignatian three methods of praying towards the end of the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* [SpEx 238-260]. José Calveras has discussed exhaustively about the subject matter or central theme, manner or proceeding, order or form and the duration of Ignatian three ways of praying<sup>135</sup>. “Concerned that a retreatant continue to exercise an active, everyday prayer life, Ignatius gives three examples of prayer that require no book resources, not even the Bible”<sup>136</sup>.

Before venturing into the analysis of the Ignatian methods of praying, it is important to clarify two pertinent questions: Why did Ignatius place these prayer methods at the end of the *Spiritual Exercises*? Why the title ‘Prayer Methods (Modos de orar)? The opinion of A. Tejerina would succinctly clarify both the questions. In response to the first question, he says:

La adaptabilidad incide en la colocación de este documento, precisamente al fin de las cuatro semanas por razones que atan a la materia y al ejercitante. Porque tres modos equivalen a formas nuevas de oración que, de otro modo o manera, se han hecho ya durante los veintiocho o treinta días precedentes; por consiguiente, la materia es la misma. Y cada ejercitante ahora, al fin de su experiencia, por haber dedicado largas e intensas horas a la oración, conoce su facilidad o dificultad para orar en cada caso y cuenta con la ayuda de quien le ha seguido día a día en las jornadas anteriores: puede permitirse sin riesgo nuevas aplicaciones. Cuando Ignacio los coloca precisamente aquí está mirando al mañana. Él, conocedor del hombre y del cristiano, sabe que en el fluir de la vida ordinaria podrán ser más fácilmente adaptadas a la oración personal que otros tipos de contemplaciones, meditaciones o exámenes<sup>137</sup>.

With regard to giving the title “prayer methods (Tres modos de orar), the same author observes the following:

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<sup>135</sup> José Calveras has researched extensively on the Ignatian prayer methods: Calveras, J., *Los Tres modos de Orar en los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio*, Editorial Librería Religiosa, Barcelona 1951. ID., “Los Tres modos de orar en los Ejercicios espirituales de San Ignacio. En qué consisten”, *Man* 3, 1927a ,193-209; ID., “Los tres modo de orar. Qué concepto tenía de ellos San Ignacio”, *Man* 3, (1927b), 310-319; ID., “Los tres modo de orar. Qué concepto tenía de ellos San Ignacio”, *Man* 4, (1928a), 22-33; ID., “Los tres modo de orar. Utilidades y aplicaciones (cont.)”, *Man* 4, (1928b), 133-152; ID., “Los tres modos de orar. Utilidades y aplicaciones (concl.)”, *Man* 4, (1928c), 193-209; ID., “Los tres modos de orar en los Directorios de Ejercicios. Introducción”, *Man* 16 (1944a) 158-172; ID., “Los tres modos de orar en los Directorios de Ejercicios. Complemento de los ejercicios”, *Man* 16 (1944b) 249-260; ID., “Los tres modos de orar en los Directorios de Ejercicios. Su práctica en los Ejercicios”, *Man* 16 (1944c) 333-341; ID., “Los tres modos de orar en los Directorios de Ejercicios”, *Man* 17 (1945) 125-144; See also Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, 515-533; Ivens, M., *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, 178-190; Tejerina, A., “Modos de orar”, *DEI*, 1278-1282; García de Castro, J., “¿Qué hacemos cuando hacemos Ejercicios? La actividad del ejercitante a través de sus verbos”, *Man* 74 (2002) 11-40; Tejerina, A., “Tres modos de orar”, *Man* 69 (1997) 51-67. Coupeau, C., “Una alternativa ignaciana poco utilizada”, 157-166.

<sup>136</sup> Fleming, D. L., *Like the lightning*, 59.

<sup>137</sup> Tejerina, A., “Modos de orar”, 1279.

Ya el título o epígrafe de "tres modos" es iluminador. Tanto en el largo camino de las cuatro semanas como en este tramo final los encabezamientos explicitan enunciativa y clarificadoramente las partes o elementos de que consta cada ejercicio. En las cuatro semanas el título señala la materia, frecuentemente seguida de la enumeración de las partes, [Ej 45.55.62.65.101.190], mientras que en "Tres Modos" el título se reduce a la materia y no se enumeran las partes de cada ejercicio [Ej 238. 244.246-247.249.258]. No se enumeran, pero se desarrollan en la descripción del cuerpo del ejercicio. Eso sí, el toque práctico o en orden a la práctica es el mismo en los dos casos. Un método y nada más que un método, no aéreo, sino concreto: sobre algo, una materia, pero al fin solamente método. Método normativo que responde a la naturaleza de todo el texto de los Ejercicios: haz esto, no lo discutas, y recogerás los frutos. De ahí que el vocablo "modo" o "modos" se emplee sesenta y dos veces en el breve texto ignaciano<sup>138</sup>.

Let us now briefly look into the three ways of praying proposed by Ignatius in the *Exercises*.

### 5.1 Ignatian First Method of Praying

La primera manera de orar es cerca de los diez mandamientos y de los siete pecados mortales, de las tres potencias del ánima y de los cinco sentidos corporales; La cual manera de orar es más dar forma, modo y ejercicios cómo el ánima se apareje y aproveche en ellos, y para que la oración sea acepta, que no dar forma ni modo alguno de orar [SpEx 238].

The first method of praying takes as its subject matter 1. The Ten Commandments, 2. The seven capital sins 3. The three faculties of the soul and 4. The five senses of the body [SpEx 238]. The first method of praying with these four subject matter “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 de Ejercicios leves, en la anotación 18”<sup>139</sup>. Interestingly, one could notice a lot of similarities between the first method of prayer and the General *Examen* in their structure and content. S. Arzubialde writes: “Comprobamos que, del examen general al primer modo de orar, varía la materia pero apenas varía el modo de trabajar con las potencias (considerar, reflexionar, examinar) ni informa de proceder escalonadamente. Excepto la primera adición y el coloquio final, la estructura es prácticamente la misma”<sup>140</sup>.

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<sup>138</sup> Tejerina, A., "Modos de orar", 1279

<sup>139</sup> Calveras, J., *Los Tres modos de Orar en los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio*, 50.

<sup>140</sup> Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, 520-521.

The first method of praying is meant for those who find hard to enter into the dynamics of the *Spiritual Exercises*. Right at the beginning of the *Exercises*, Ignatius writes:

Juntamente, por media hora a la mañana, el modo de orar sobre los mandamientos, pecados mortales, etc. [en] comendándole también la confesión de sus pecados de ocho en ocho días y, si puede, tomar el sacramento de quince en quince, y si se afecta mejor de ocho en ocho. 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 subyecto o de poca capacidad natural, de quien no se espera mucho fruto, más conveniente es darle algunos de estos *ejercicios leves* hasta que se confiese de sus pecados [SpEx 18].

Ignatius is very considerate towards those who are not accustomed to pray or rather find difficult to pray. Hence, through this simple method, Ignatius invites the retreatant to ponder over the matters of Christian faith (Los diez Mandamientos, los siete pecados capitales etc...) a person is already familiar with by taking a meditative approach. Strictly speaking, the first method of prayer cannot be considered as a method of prayer. It is “más dar forma, modo y ejercicios” [SpEx 238]. Ignatius has proposed this method “a disponer al hombre para el cambio de vida y a la adopción de las actitudes fundamentales cristianas. Para que «*su oración sea acepta*»... el hombre se confronta con los pilares básicos de la vida cristiana y, de este modo, se dispone y ayuda para que su oración suba a Dios”<sup>141</sup>.

## 5.2 Ignatian Second Method of Praying

El segundo modo de orar es que la persona, de rodillas o sentado, según la mayor disposición en que se halla y más devoción le acompaña, teniendo los ojos cerrados o hincados en un lugar, sin andar con ellos variando, diga Pater, y esté en la consideración de esta palabra tanto tiempo cuanto halla significaciones, comparaciones, gustos y consolación en consideraciones pertinentes a la tal palabra y de la misma manera haga en cada palabra del Pater noster, o de otra oración cualquiera que de esta manera quisiere orar [SpEx 252].

The fundamental Christian prayers like the Our Father, Hail Mary, Creed, Soul of Christ, and Hail Holy Queen are the prayer material for the second method of praying. These basic Christian prayers help the person to open up to God. The question is how does this method differ from that of the first? In this method, Ignatius suggests that one should pray repeating

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<sup>141</sup> Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, 521-522.

each word more consciously and then if one finds in one or two words matter which yields thought (entendimiento), relish (gustos), and consolation (consolación), one should remain in contemplation for the entire one hour without hurrying up to finish the prayer” [SpEx 253-255]. Ignatius also proposes that one could pray “sitting or kneeling” [SpEx 252]. Thus Ignatius calls this method of praying as *contemplación* [SpEx 249].

### 5.3 Ignatian Third Method of Praying

El tercer modo de orar es que con cada un anhélito o resuello se ha de orar mentalmente, diciendo una palabra del Pater noster, o de otra oración que se rece, de manera que una sola palabra se diga entre un anhélito y otro. Y mientras durare el tiempo de un anhélito a otro, se mire principalmente en la significación de la tal palabra, o en la persona a quien reza, o en la bajeza de sí mismo, o en la diferencia de tanta alteza a tanta bajeza propia. Y por la misma forma y regla procederá en las otras palabras del Pater noster; y las otras oraciones, es a saber, Avemaría, Anima Christi, Credo y Salve Regina, hará según que suele [258].

The third method of praying is way of praying following the rhythmic measures of the respiration. There is no change in prayer material. This method could be seen as the continuation of the Ignatian second way of praying<sup>142</sup>. Commenting on the Ignatian second and third method of praying, S. Arzubialde observes:

El segundo y el tercer modo de orar forman un bloque homogéneo, una unidad. Ambos se basan en la fórmula de una oración y ambos, aunque su ritmo sea diverso, están destinados a penetrar en los tesoros de la fe cristiana por la recitación (...) Su origen es tradicional. En la Iglesia desde siempre se han practicado estos modos de oración<sup>143</sup>.

Ignatian second and third method of praying are rooted in the Christian spiritual tradition. Ignatius simply presents “sintéticamente un práctica tradicional, proveniente preferentemente del ámbito catequético contemplativo”<sup>144</sup>. Both are deemed as “una mezcla de oración vocal y mental que tiene por objetivo el ahondamiento en los contenidos básicos de la fe”<sup>145</sup>.

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<sup>142</sup> Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, 531.

<sup>143</sup> Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, 524.

<sup>144</sup> Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, 524.

<sup>145</sup> Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, 515.

The prayer methods of Ignatius help us to establish contact with God during the *Spiritual Exercises*. These prayer methods are means to make a profound encounter between human person and God possible during the *Spiritual Exercises* and also in the ordinary life.

Puestos al final del Libro de los Ejercicios, acabada ya la cuarta Semana, los tres modos de orar son un complemento del mismo y forman, junto con los misterios de la vida del Señor [261-312], unos métodos de oración (modos y contenidos) destinados a enseñar a orar, para ser ejercitados durante los mismos Ejercicios y después, fuera de ellos, en el tiempo de la perseverancia<sup>146</sup>.

## Conclusion

At the end of the discussion on the crux of the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*, we can very well affirm that the book of *Spiritual Exercises* is a significant instrument that nourishes our relationship with God, deepens the God-consciousness as well as helps us to seek and do God's will in our daily living. The Ignatian *Exercises*, if made with right disposition, help the person to encounter God in all things and all things in God. We shall dedicate the ensuing chapter to speak about the essence of the Eastern prayer methods such as Nāma Japa, Yoga and Zen, the well-recognized and widely practised by many in the Eastern spiritual tradition to enhance divine as well as human consciousness.

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<sup>146</sup> Arzubialde, S., *Ejercicios espirituales. Historia y análisis*, 515

## CHAPTER 2

### EASTERN PRAYER METHODS

### Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen

#### **Introduction**

We find various prayer methods in the Eastern spiritual tradition<sup>147</sup>. This chapter will examine three prominent Eastern forms of prayer namely Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen. We shall at the outset discuss on Yoga because it has been a characteristic dimension of Indian thought and spirituality. Sadly, however, Yoga has been mostly identified with a set of physical and mental exercises. We shall also look at briefly another Hindu prayer called Nāma Japa, an exemplar of a prayer method in the non-Christian Eastern spiritual tradition and we come across in Nāma Japa some parallels to the Christian prayer of the Holy Name popularly known as Jesus Prayer. We will conclude this chapter by highlighting the essence of Zen. In general, we observe unfortunately some misconception and suspicion especially regarding the practice of Yoga and Zen. Yoga and Zen that are widely practised by many including a number of Christians are often misunderstood as well as misinterpreted<sup>148</sup>. Therefore, before embarking upon an interfaith dialogue and practice of the Eastern prayer methods such as Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen during the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* which is the central theme of this paper, let us briefly clarify the crux or the essence of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen.

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<sup>147</sup> Besides Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen, we also find other Eastern prayer methods such as Transcendental Meditation, Vipasana, Mindfulness Meditation etc...

<sup>148</sup> See the article <https://www.aciprensa.com/controversias/yoga.htm> (accessed on 31.03.2016) where the author categorically states that the practice of Yoga is incompatible with the Christianity. I believe that this is the result of an erroneous understanding of Yoga.

## 2.1 Yoga

Four basic and interdependent concepts such as *karma*, *maya*, *nirvana* and *Yoga* are the core of Indian spirituality. They can be explained as below:

- 1) The law of universal causality, which connects man with the cosmos and condemns him to transmigrate indefinitely. This is the law of *karma*.
- 2) The mysterious process that engenders and maintains the cosmos and, in so doing, makes possible the “eternal return” of existences. This is *maya* cosmic illusion, endured (even worse accorded validity) by man as long as he is blinded by ignorance (*avidya*).
- 3) Absolute reality, “situated” somewhere beyond the cosmic illusion woven by *maya* and beyond human experience as conditioned by *karma*; pure Being, the Absolute, by whatever name it may be called—the Self (*Atman*), *brahman*, the unconditioned, the transcendent, the immortal, the indestructible, *nirvana*, etc.
- 4) The means of attaining to Being, the effectual techniques for gaining liberation. This corpus of means constitutes *Yoga* properly speaking<sup>149</sup>.

The above mentioned four concepts are essential to comprehend the basic problem of all philosophy presents itself to Indian thought i.e the search for truth. “For India, truth is not precious in itself; it becomes precious by virtue of its soteriological function, because the knowledge of truth helps man to liberate himself”<sup>150</sup>. Let us take up *Yoga* which is the focus of our discussion.

### 2.1.1 The Essence of Yoga

*Yoga* is an effective means to attain human liberation. *Yoga* is considered to be an art, a science and a philosophy. *Yoga* penetrates into every sphere of human existence be it physical, mental, and spiritual. However, nowadays *Yoga* is practiced more as a means to attain physical and mental wellbeing<sup>151</sup>. “Many practise yogic postures to get rid of back pain, complaints of arthritis, headache and neck pain, or to maintain a good flexible physique. To some others *Yoga* is a means to reduce mental tension and worries, and to assure sound sleep. Yet another group vigorously pursues the practice of *Yoga* for greater vitality and satisfaction

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<sup>149</sup> Eliade, M., *Immortality and Freedom*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1958, 3.

<sup>150</sup> Eliade, M., *Immortality and Freedom*, 4.

<sup>151</sup> There are of course many health benefits if a person engages in the regular practice of *Yoga*. “The vital organs will retain their youthful vigor and efficiency. The body will become light and resilient with better neuro-muscular coordination and metabolic efficiency. With increased suppleness of body and mind, the senses will work better”: Yogeswar, *Simple Yoga and Therapy*, Yoga Centre, Madras 1986, 13, in: Thadam, C. S., “*Yoga: A Way to Inner Peace and Harmony*”, *Asian Journal for priests and religious* 54, No. 5, (2009), 28.

in sexual life”<sup>152</sup>. It is indeed unfortunate that most of the people in the modern times particularly the practitioners in the west tend to neglect the spiritual dimension of the practice of Yoga.

Yoga is a way to inner peace and harmony. Yoga approaches life in a harmonious way, a unified whole of body, mind and spirit by the practice of *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, and *dhyāna* for insight into a person’s deeper self. Systematic and disciplined practice of Yoga under the able guidance of an experienced and enlightened *guru* (master) would bring a great spiritual benefit in the sense that the practice of Yoga would enable a person to withdraw one’s senses and look deep into oneself<sup>153</sup>. As the days pass by, in *Yogi*<sup>154</sup> “the experience of dualism and separation disappears and experience of bliss (*kaivalya anubhava*) ushers in. Thus the yogi remains united with the Supreme Being”<sup>155</sup> and the entire universe.

### 2.1.2 Origin and Development of Yoga

Indian ascetics and mystics were the ones who practiced and developed Yoga as a means to establish communion with God.

Los orígenes del Yoga son religiosos. En la India, hace de esto miles de años, los ascetas (especie de monjes) notaron que ciertas posturas del cuerpo y determinadas formas de respirar favorecían mucho la vida de oración y contemplación a que estaban dedicados. No eran cristianos. Pero como muchos otros pueblos, buscaban a Dios con todo su corazón y deseaban mantenerse unidos a El “Gran Principio”, según ellos mismos decían, “Gran Fuerza o Energía” que obra en el Universo<sup>156</sup>.

Patañjali supposed to have written the first systematic treatise on Yoga. Historically speaking, Patañjali, the grammarian, is believed to have lived between 500 and 200 B.C., but much of what we know of him is drawn from legends. Patañjali is also known as a *svayambhu*, an evolved soul incarnated of his own will to assist the humanity. He assumed human form,

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<sup>152</sup> Thadam, C. S., “Yoga: A Way to Inner Peace and Harmony”, 26.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. Thadam, C. S., “Yoga: A Way to Inner Peace and Harmony”, 27.

<sup>154</sup> *Yogi* in the true sense of the word is a person who “has integrated his body with his spirit (...) a man of unwavering courage, steadied consciousness (*sitaprajna*) and, therefore, of perfect balance of mind (*sama-dhi*)”.

<sup>155</sup> Thadam, C. S., “Yoga: A Way to Inner Peace and Harmony”, 27.

<sup>156</sup> Dechanet, J. M., *Yoga Cristiano en diez lecciones*, Desclée de Brouwer, Bilbao 1982<sup>7</sup>, 33.

experienced the joys and sorrows that the human persons ordinarily go through in life. Patañjali is revered today because in the Yoga sutras<sup>157</sup>, he systematically described the ways and means of overcoming the afflictions of the body and the fluctuations of the mind: the obstacles to spiritual development. Patañjali wrote 196 aphorisms or sutras that cover all aspects of human existence. These sutras prescribe a code of conduct as well as throw sufficient light on a vision of the true Self of a human person. Yoga sutras of Patañjali are divided into four chapters or *padas*<sup>158</sup>. All the 196 sutras are indeed succinct, precise, profound, and very devout in approach. These sutras guide a Yoga practitioner (*sādhaka*) to attain self-realization<sup>159</sup>.

Yoga has its origin and foundation in Samkhya philosophy. Patañjali did not make a substantial contribution to the theoretical framework and the metaphysical foundation of Yoga. He merely repeated and reinterpreted in its broad outlines, the Samkhya philosophy. There were a lot of resemblance between Yoga and Samkhya philosophical systems. The fundamental differences between are stated below:

Samkhya was atheistic, Yoga was theistic, since it postulated the existence of a supreme God (*Isvara*). While according to Samkhya the only route to salvation is that of metaphysical knowledge, Yoga granted considerable importance to the techniques of meditation. In sum, what can properly be called Patañjali's work was directed principally to the coordination of the philosophical material-borrowed from Samkhya with the technical prescriptions for

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<sup>157</sup> Nothing is certain about the author of the Yoga sutras. Some Indian commentators, including King Bhoja (eleventh century), have attributed its authorship to Patañjali. Cf. Eliade, M., *Pantanjali and Yoga*, Schocken Books., New York 1975, 19. "Pantajali's Yoga-sutras are the result of an enormous effort not only to bring together and classify a series of ascetic practices and contemplative formulas that India had known from time immemorial, but also to validate them from a theoretical point of view by establishing their bases, justifying them, and incorporating them into a philosophy. But Patanjali is not the creator of the Yoga "philosophy," just as he is not-and could not be-the inventor of yogic techniques. He admits himself that he is merely publishing and correcting (*atha yoganusasanam*) the doctrinal and technical traditions of Yoga". See Eliade, M., *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 4 and also Patañjali's Yoga-sutra I.1.

<sup>158</sup> The four chapters or *padas* of Patañjali's Yoga sutras are: 1. *Samādhi pada* (on contemplation) 2. *Sādhana pada* (on practice) 3. *Vibhuti pada* (on properties and powers) 4. *Kaivalya pada* (on emancipation and freedom). "The four *padas* correspond to the four *varnas* or divisions of labour; the four *asramas* or stages of life; the three *gunas* or qualities of nature and the fourth state beyond them (*satva, rajas, tamas and gunatita*) and the four *purusarthas* or aims of life. In the concluding sutra of the fourth *pada*, Patañjali speaks of the culmination of *purusarthas* and *gunas* as the highest goal of yoga *sadhana*. These concepts must have been wholly understood in Patañjali's time, and therefore implicit in the earlier chapters, for him to speak of them explicitly only at the very end of the book. The ultimate effect of following the path laid out by Patañjali is to experience the effortless, indivisible state of the seer", Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali*, Harper Collins Publishers India and The India Today Group, New Delhi 1993, 3. For a detailed discussion on Patañjali's Yoga sutras, see Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali*, 3-8.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali*, 1-3.

concentration, meditation, and ecstasy. Thanks to Patañjali, Yoga was advanced from a "mystic" tradition to the level of a "system of philosophy"<sup>160</sup>.

We should bear in mind that "Yoga is not a matter of belief; it is that inner growth of consciousness which results in direct insight into the heart of reality. It is not conformity to scriptural injunctions or some fixed socio-cultural pattern, but progressive realization of the full freedom of the inner spirit. It endeavours to turn doubt into critical self-inquiry and faith into living experience. In a sense Yoga is a kind of universal religion"<sup>161</sup>.

### 2.1.3 Etymology and Definition of Yoga

Etymologically the term Yoga comes from the Sanskrit *yuj* which signifies "to bind together," "hold fast," "yoke," which also governs Latin *jungere*, *jugum*, French *joug*, etc. Generally speaking, the term Yoga serves to designate any *ascetic technique* and any *method of meditation*<sup>162</sup>.

It is not easy to define Yoga. However, the classical definition of Yoga is given by Patañjali who defined Yoga as "the suppression of states of consciousness" (*Yogahcittavrtti-nirodhyah*)<sup>163</sup>. To Patañjali, Yoga is a means to restraint *citta* or consciousness. The term *citta* doesn't signify the human mind alone. *Citta* is composed of mind (*manas*), intelligence (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahamkara*) which combine into one composite whole. The term 'self' represents a human person as an individual entity. Its identity is invariably separate from mind, intelligence and ego, depending upon the development of the individual<sup>164</sup>. God, *Paramatman*, or *Purusa visesan* is identified as the Universal Soul, the seed of all<sup>165</sup>. The individual soul, *Jivatman* or *Purusa* is the seed of the individual self. The soul is therefore different or distinct from the self. Soul is without form, while self has a form. The soul is an entity, separate from the body and free from the self. Soul is the very essence of the core of one's being<sup>166</sup>. Patañjali

<sup>160</sup> Eliade, M., *Pantanjali and Yoga*, 19.

<sup>161</sup> Chaudhuri, H., *Integral Yoga: The Concept of Harmonious and Creative Living*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London 1965, 22.

<sup>162</sup> Eliade, M., *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, 4.

<sup>163</sup> Yoga-sutras, I, 2.

<sup>164</sup> Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali*, 3.

<sup>165</sup> Yoga-sutras, I, 24.

<sup>166</sup> Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patañjali*, 11.

begins the treatise on Yoga by explaining the functioning of the mind, so that we may learn to discipline it, and intelligence, ego and consciousness may be restrained, subdued and diffused, then drawn towards the core of our being and absorbed in the soul. This is called Yoga. Hence Yoga is “a suspension of the modifications of the thinking principle which is obtainable through different methods such as controlling the vital breath and steady pose, both of which are intimately connected with the mind”<sup>167</sup>. Haridas Chaudhuri has put it succinctly the essence of Yoga:

Yoga literally means union and control. It signifies the union of man with God, of the individual with the universal reality, of each with the All of existence. It means union of the mortal with the eternal. It implies union of the mind with the inmost centre of one's own being, the self or aim an-union of the conscious mind with the deeper levels of the in the integration of personality. That is indeed the chief objective of Yoga. But Yoga also means control, that is to say, appropriate self-discipline. It is the mobilization of the inner resources of personality with a view to attaining that self-integration which religion calls God-realization, and mysticism calls immediate union with the infinite. In this sense Yoga is the method or technique, the programme of psycho-physical, moral and spiritual training, by following which one can fulfil the ultimate destiny of life. The word Yoga thus implies both the goal of life and the path leading to that goal<sup>168</sup>.

## 2.1.4 Distinction between Yoga of Patañjali, the Bhagavad Gita and Sri Aurobindo

### 2.1.4 [A] Patañjali Yoga or Rāja Yoga or Ashtanga Yoga

The purpose of yogic meditation is to achieve concentration on a single object (*ekagrata*). This object could be physical (the point between the eyebrows, the tip of the nose, a luminous object, etc.) or perhaps a thought (a metaphysical truth), or God (*Isvara*). The concentration *ekagrata* helps a person to acquire a true will namely the ability to control freely an important sector of psychosomatic activity. The concentration or *ekagrata* can be achieved only by means of exercises and techniques in which physiology plays a vital role. It is highly impossible to acquire concentration if a person is restless, uncomfortable or if one has no control over the respiration (disorganized and unrhythmic). There are many categories of physiological practices and spiritual exercises (known as *anga*, "members") that make a person to attain

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<sup>167</sup> Swami Vishnudevananda, *The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga*, Pocket Books, New York 1960, 13 in: Thadom, C. S., “Yoga: A Way to Inner Peace and Harmony”, 28.

<sup>168</sup> Chaudhuri, H., *Integral Yoga: The Concept of Harmonious and Creative Living*, 21.

*ekagrata* and, at the extreme, *samadhi*, the supreme concentration. These *anga* or "members" of Yoga constitute a group of techniques and follow a spiritual ascetic itinerary called "Eightfold technique of Patañjali Yoga (Ashtanga Yoga)"<sup>169</sup> which we will discuss in the following section.

#### 2.1.4 [A].1 Eightfold technique of Patañjali Yoga (Ashtanga Yoga)

Patañjali's method of approach to Yoga is known as *Ashtanga Yoga* because of its eight steps (The eight limbs of Yoga). They are as cited below<sup>170</sup>:

<b><i>Yama</i></b>	<p><i>Yama</i> means self-control. The five principles of <i>Yama</i> namely <b><i>Ahimsa</i></b> (interpreted in India as one's sheer determination not to cause pain to others by one's thought, word or deed corresponding Indian terms are <i>manasa, vaca, karmana</i>), <b><i>Satya</i></b> (strong determination to follow the path of truth), <b><i>Asteya</i></b> (Non-possessiveness), <b><i>Brahma-carya</i></b> (It means that the aspirant of Yoga opts for Brahman i.e God as the ultimate goal of life. Negatively speaking, it demands a control over the tendency in our relationship with others), <b><i>Aparigraha</i></b> (literally means <i>Not to hold on</i> to i.e. detachment from all worldly things). Patañjali writes: "Un restricted to any particular caste, country, season or time these virtues become great universal vows for all" (Yoga Sutra II, 31)</p>
<b><i>Niyama</i></b>	<p><i>Niyama</i> signifies rules to be observed. Along with the five principles of self-control, Patañjali suggests the practice of five positive virutes. They are <i>Sauca</i> (means clealiness. It is a call to remain pure and free from all cravings of Ego), <i>Santosha</i> (signifies</p>

<sup>169</sup> Eliade, M., *Pantanjali and Yoga*, 19.

<sup>170</sup> Patañjali deals with the *Ashtanga Yoga* in *Yoga Sutra* II. 29 to III. 8. The eight limbs or steps are spoken of in *Yoga Sutra* II. 29. Cf. V.F. Vineeth, *Yoga of spirituality*, Vidya Vanam Publications, Bangalore 1995, 75-165. For a Christian interpretation See also T.M. Manikam, "Astangayoga in Christian Spiritual Discipline", *Jeevadhara*, 36, (1976), 527-536.

	inner contentment. The spirit of detachment makes a person to be joyful), <i>Tapas</i> (spiritual ardour obtained through asceticism and renunciation of things), <i>Svadyaya</i> (self-study of sacred scriptures to attain self-realization) and <i>Isvara-Pranidhana</i> ( <i>Isvara</i> stands for God-head one is in touch with while <i>Pranidhana</i> is a constant meditative attention to the Lord in daily prayer and action). Regarding <i>Niyama</i> Patañjali says: “In order to counteract thoughts hostile to self-realization we have to nurture positive helpful thoughts” (Yoga Sutra II, 33).
<b>Asana</b>	<i>Asana</i> (steady and comfortable posture). Patañjali would summarize all regulations on postures in two simple words: <i>Sitṛa</i> (steady) and <i>Sukha</i> (pleasant) i.e. <i>stira-sukha-asana</i> . Patañjali writes: “ <i>Asana</i> is any bodily posture that is steady and pleasant” (Yoga Sutra II, 46). During the practice of Yoga, <i>Asanas</i> are means to tame the body for the sake of the spirit and not just as means to keep the body fit and strong.
<b>Pranayama</b>	<i>Pranayama</i> (the rhythm of breath). <i>Prana</i> literally means life and <i>yama</i> signifies control. So <i>Pranayama</i> would mean “regulating the life force”. Patañjali comments: “ <i>Pranayama</i> is the stoppage of inhalation and exhalation which follows the steadiness of posture” (Yoga Sutra II, 49). The outcome of <i>Pranayama</i> meditation would be peace, freshness and relaxation.
<b>Pratyahara</b>	<i>Pratyahara</i> (withdrawal from senses). The withdrawal of the sense from their objects is known as <i>Pratyahara</i> . It means silencing the body. Patañjali defines it as: “ <i>Pratyahara</i> means withdrawal of mind and sense organs from their respective sense organs and abidance therein, whereby the senses become sublimated into the very form of consciousness” (Yoga Sutra II, 54).

<b><i>Dharana</i></b>	<i>Dharana</i> (concentration). Concentration is <i>ekagrata</i> (one-pointedness of attention). Patañjali suggests (Yoga Sutra I, 20-28) that the beginners in Yoga need to start with fixing their attention on one chosen object ( <i>Istadevata</i> ). <i>Istadevata</i> means one's favourite deity.
<b><i>Dhyana</i></b>	<i>Dhyana</i> or meditation commences with a sense of unbroken concentration. <i>Dharana</i> (concentration) gradually leads to <i>Dhyana</i> as long as the person can meditate keeping his attention focused for a long duration. Patañjali defines <i>dhyana</i> as follows (Yoga Sutra III, 20): <i>Dhyanam</i> (meditation) is the steadied evenness of mind in <i>Dharana</i> (concentration).
<b><i>Samadhi</i></b>	<i>Samadhi</i> is understood as well as interpreted differently. It is a state of perfect equilibrium. <i>Samadhi</i> , the Sanskrit word means equal-mindedness: <i>sama</i> (equal) and <i>dhi</i> (mind). <i>Samadhi</i> is also interpreted as <i>samyak</i> (well-established) <i>dhi</i> (mind) meaning firmly established or steady mind. <i>Samadhi</i> is a state of absorption in the Divine, an empowerment from within as the soul has finally discovered what it was craving or desiring for.

#### **2.1.4 [B] Yoga of the Bhagavad Gita**

The Bhagavad Gita has interpreted the Yoga sutras of Patañjali placing the emphasis on *Jñāna* (wisdom), *Bhakti* (devotion) and *Karma* (action) to reach Self-Realization<sup>171</sup>.

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<sup>171</sup> Cf. Pavulraj Michael, *Discernment and Yogic consciousness*, Vaigarai Publications, Dindigul 2003, 94-123; See V.F. Vineeth, *Yoga of spirituality*, 169-227.

<b>Jñāna Yoga</b>	It believes in attaining yogic consciousness through knowledge. It aims at the expansion of consciousness that enables the human person to look at the reality holistically. Jñāna Yoga offers “the most powerful means of self-purification and the surest way to ultimate union with the Divine (Bhagavad Gita, 4, 36-39).
<b>Bhakti Yoga</b>	It believes in attaining yogic consciousness through devotion. Bhakti Yoga makes the salvific way accessible to all irrespective of caste based-divisions if a <i>bhakta</i> (devotee) consciously and consistently searches the will of God through loving and unwavering devotion (Bhagavad Gita, 9, 30-32).
<b>Karma Yoga</b>	It believes in attaining yogic consciousness through work. Karma Yoga is the spiritual way of action. By practicing Karma Yoga human persons take part in the work of God who labours all the time for maintaining the universe in being and order (Bhagavad Gita, 3, 22-24).

#### **2.1.4 [C] Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo**

Aurobindo Ghose, popularly known as Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950, Calcutta) was indeed a multifaceted personality. He was an Indian nationalist who took part in the Indian movement for independence from British rule. Sri Aurobindo was a spiritual reformer with a great vision on human progress and spiritual evolution.

Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo<sup>172</sup> offers its own solutions to many of the perennial philosophical, religious and moral quests of human person.

Integral Yoga may be defined as the art of harmonious and creative living. It stresses the need for the balanced growth of personality; for constructive development of the latent possibilities of one's nature; and for their employment in the service of mankind and such higher values as truth, justice, freedom, peace and progress. Integral Yoga warns against extreme tendencies which mislead people into lopsided development<sup>173</sup>.

The relevant question is this: in what way Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga is different from Patañjali's method of approach to Yoga? The difference is that aims at the integration of matter and spirit by which Spirit (*Atman*) is involuted in matter and hence matter is gradually evolving into Spirit through various stages of life, Psyche, Mind, Supermind, Bliss, Consciousness – Force and Existence. Whereas Patañjali's Yoga was world-renouncing and life-negating in character. Integral Yoga, however, affirms life and desires to bring down into the world and life, the light, power and bliss of the Divine Truth<sup>174</sup>.

The above distinction between Yoga of Patañjali, the Bhagavad Gita and Sri Aurobindo reveals that there is an evolution in the understanding and the practice of Yoga. Patañjali was not fundamentally concerned with the God-realization instead he was more concerned with the eradication of human pain by restoring the perfect equilibrium (*sama-dhi*) of human consciousness. Later on, Bhagavad Gita and Sri Aurobindo slightly altered and modified the techniques of Yoga, the basic vision of Patañjali and integrated the teaching of Yoga into their systems and became more God-centred. K. P Aleaz writes very clearly:

Many Christian Thinkers consider Yoga, not as one of the six systems of Indian philosophy, but categorized into Sākta Yoga or the Yoga of Bhagavad Gita or vedantic or Saivasiddhāntic Yoga. In the Sāṅkyā- Yoga philosophical dualism, Yoga means only separation of soul (*purusa*) from matter (*prakrti*) and not a union or communion of the soul with God. This important point is not considered with clarity by many a Christian thinkers. In Yoga philosophy the individual through stopping mental modifications (*cittavṛttinirodha*) comes to the realization that he/she is not matter (*prakrti*) i.e body, senses, mind, intellect and ego, but the soul (*purusa*). Such

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<sup>172</sup> Chaudhuri, H., *Integral Yoga: The Concept of Harmonious and Creative Living*. Writing the preface for this book, Pitirim A. Sorokin opines the following: "Integral Yoga by Haridas Chaudhuri is the best one-volume work on this topic. His analysis of the integral yoga, its principles and its relationship to other forms of yoga, to modern Western thought, to different systems of philosophy and religion including mysticism, is so admirably done".

<sup>173</sup> Chaudhuri, H., *Integral Yoga: The Concept of Harmonious and Creative Living*, 37.

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Aleaz, K.P., "Christian Response to Yoga Philosophy", *Bangalore theological Forum*, 37, n. 1, (2005), 191.

discriminative knowledge (*vivekñāna*) leads to liberation (moksa). Of course the practical value of God is accepted in Patañjali's Yoga Philosophy. Devotion to God is considered to be of great practical value, inasmuch as it forms a part of the practice of Yoga and is one of the means for the final attainment of Samadhi – Yoga or “the restraint of the mind”. But this is different from Yoga as ascent into the Divine, a communion with God, envisaged for example in the Bhagavad Gita. The Christian scholars are unable to grasp this distinction. Hence the limitation of Christian response to the Yoga Philosophy<sup>175</sup>.

I subscribe to the views of K.P. Aleaz. I am of the opinion that one of the reasons why we find some misconceptions about Yoga is because people especially Christians fail to figure out the basic distinction between Yoga of Patañjali, the Bhagavad Gita and the integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo.

From the above discussion, it is evident that in the Indian spiritual tradition, Yoga is practiced as a spiritual discipline, a way of realizing the Divine or awakening the Divine. Therefore, the main objective or function of Yoga is “to guide the aspirant to spirituality along with the path of discrimination (*Viveka*) which enables him to distinguish between the eternal and not-eternal, the transcendent and the temporal”<sup>176</sup>. Yoga is therefore a *sadhana* or spiritual means or art of uniting the individual self (*Jivatman*) with the Divine Self (*Paramatman*). Hence one has to approach Yoga not only for physical and mental wellness, but also with a deep desire to enrich the consciousness of God.

## 2.2 Nāma Japa

Repetition of the name of God is a prayer form found in all major religious traditions. Majority of the spiritual traditions have recommended the silent repetition of the Holy name. Herbert Benson has discovered historic traces of the Holy Name prayer in Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Shamanism and Taoism<sup>177</sup>. Many of the major world religions have made use of Nāma Japa as a prayer method to establish communion with God, the Ultimate Mystery of life.

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<sup>175</sup> Aleaz, K.P., “Christian Response to Yoga Philosophy”, 183.

<sup>176</sup> V.F. Vineeth. *Yoga of spirituality*, 74.

<sup>177</sup> Benson, H. H., *The Relaxation Response*, William Morrow and Co, New York 1975 in: Baesler, E. J., “The Prayer of the holy name in Eastern and western spiritual traditions: A theoretical, cross-cultural, and intercultural prayer dialogue”, 198.

The practice of the prayer of the divine name is found in some way or the other both in primal religions – which are confined to a particular tribal community or to some folk religiosity, and also in the religions, which have found followers from peoples of different regions of the earth<sup>178</sup>.

### 2.2.1 The Essence of Nāma Japa

Nāma Japa is a form of prayer that enables the human persons to be in touch with the divine as it is a continual prayer. The word Nāma signifies *name* and Japa would mean *repetition*. The prayer of the Holy Name is a “kind of spiritual formula that is usually associated with the name(s) of God. This prayer of the name “keeps the mind focused, one pointed (*Ekagra*). The mind, once stabilized, plunges spontaneously within itself, towards its centre”<sup>179</sup>. We shall now explore the practice of Nāma Japa in Hindu religious tradition.

### 2.2.2 Nāma Japa in the Hindu Religious Tradition

In Hindu religious tradition<sup>180</sup>, Nāma Japa is believed to be more than 5000 years old<sup>181</sup>. “All Hindu traditions encourage this method of prayer to all even for those who have advanced on the way to perfection in spiritual life: For those who have turned away from this world, and want to be freed from all fear, and also for accomplished spiritual men the recitation of the name of the Lord is the best way”<sup>182</sup>. Since God is said to have innumerable names<sup>183</sup>, the devotee is advised to choose his favourite name for God and repeat it all his life”<sup>184</sup>. Mahatma Gandhi indeed practiced Nāma Japa all through his life very faithfully<sup>185</sup>. It is common belief that the very utterance of the name of God brings down upon the believer the grace and power of God. Bhagavad-Gita teaches to be in touch with the divine all the moment. Bhagavad Gita chapter 8, 6-8 says:

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<sup>178</sup> Anand, S., “The Prayer of the Name in the Hindu Tradition”, *Journal of Dharma* 28, No. 4, (2003), 440.

<sup>179</sup> Aleaz, K.P., “Christian Response to Yoga Philosophy”, 185.

<sup>180</sup> For a deeper and critical analysis of the prayer of name in the Hindu tradition, See Anand, S., “The Prayer of the Name in the Hindu Tradition”.

<sup>181</sup> Punnapadam, T., *Jesus Prayer*, Kristu Jyoti Publications, Bangalore 2005, 19.

<sup>182</sup> Bhāgavata- purāna, 2.1.11 as quoted in: Anand, S., “The Prayer of the Name in the Hindu Tradition”, 446.

<sup>183</sup> According to Hindu tradition, God is said to have thirty three crores of names. Cf. Punnapadam, T., *Jesus Prayer*, 60.

<sup>184</sup> Punnapadam, T., *Jesus Prayer*, 58.

<sup>185</sup> Cf. Anand, S., “The Prayer of the Name in the Hindu Tradition”, 451.

Arjuna, thinking of whatever object one leaves the body at the time of death, that and that alone he attains, being ever absorbed in its thought. Therefore, Arjuna, think of Me at all times and fight. With mind and reason thus surrendered to Me, you will doubtless come to me. Arjuna, he who with his mind established in Yoga in the form of practice of meditation, and thinking of nothing else, is constantly engaged in contemplation of God, attains the supreme *Purusa* (God)<sup>186</sup>.

This teaching of Bhagavad- Gita can be effectively put into practice by engaging in Nāma Japa. Nāma Japa is a simple prayer method found in the Indian spiritual tradition to be engaged in the contemplation of God all the time.

What a lot of joy the repetition of His name brings! What a lot of power it infuses into man! How it changes the human nature marvellously! How it exalts a man to the status of Divinity!... How sweet is God's Name! How it brings you face to face with the Lord and makes you realise your oneness with Him (*Para Bhakti- Supreme Love*)!<sup>187</sup>.

### **2.2.2 [A] Three Types of Nāma Japa**

In general, the practice of Nāma Japa in Hindu tradition is of three kinds<sup>188</sup>:

#### **(a) *Vaikhari* (audible) Japa**

One has to recite or sing the Name audibly. By producing sound vibration, the mind will gradually be calmed and steadied. It is suggested that a person stick to *Vaikhari* in regular meditation sessions until one is able to pray without getting distracted.

#### **(b) *Upamau* (whispering) Japa**

There is only lip-movement in such a way that only a person can hear. This type of Nāma Japa is recommended to those who practise *Japa* for eight or ten hours a day for a particular intention.

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<sup>186</sup> I have referred the edition: Goyandka, J., *The Bhagavadgita or the song divine*, Gita press, Gorakhpur 1971.

<sup>187</sup> Swami Sivananda, *Japa Yoga*, Divine Live Society, Sivanandanagar 1980, 36 as cited in the article: Anand, S., "The Prayer of the Name in the Hindu Tradition", 452.

<sup>188</sup> Cf. Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay 1984, 8.

### (c) Mānasik (mental) Japa:

Those who have mastered the first two will certainly make steady progress through the practice of Mānasik Japa. It is believed to be the most subtle, the most powerful and the most common form of Japa. The vast majority of *Bhaktas* (Devotees) or saints in India have attained to God through the practice of Mānasik Japa.

Hence Nāma Japa in the Eastern Hindu traditions “consists of repeating the name of God audibly or mentally for a set period of time or a set number of invocations or the continual repetition of the Name of during all of one’s activities”<sup>189</sup>.

#### 2.2.2 [B] Different Ways of Practicing Nāma Japa

##### 1. Nāma Japa by Means of *Mantras*

Traditionally speaking, Nāma Japa is practised by repeating a *mantra* which could be a name of a God either alone or as part of a spiritual formula which the disciple obtains from a spiritual *guru* or master in secret<sup>190</sup>. A *mantra* is “a sacred syllable, word or a set of words considered to be powerful to kindle spiritual awareness in the one who devotedly recites it”<sup>191</sup>. “En su sentido amplio la palabra mantra significa algo que nos ayuda a aquietarnos y tranquilizarnos. Un mantra, por consiguiente, puede ser profano. Hay mantras de diverso tipo. Un sonido, una nota musical, un canto, si cumplen determinadas condiciones, pueden considerarse mantras. Hasta una pintura, una escultura, una imagen pueden producir efectos similares a los propios del mantra. El mantra puede estar formado por una sola palabra o por varias debidamente acopladas”<sup>192</sup>. Some of the characteristics of a *mantra* are the following:

- Conecta con nuestra vida interior: la abre al presente.
- Posee semilla latente de futuro.
- Es portador de carga emocional.

<sup>189</sup> Baesler E. J., “The prayer of the holy name in Eastern and western spiritual traditions: A theoretical, cross-cultural, and intercultural prayer dialogue”, 205.

<sup>190</sup> Baesler E. J., “The prayer of the holy name in Eastern and western spiritual traditions: A theoretical, cross-cultural, and intercultural prayer dialogue”, 204.

<sup>191</sup> V.F. Vineeth. *Yoga of spirituality*, 6.

<sup>192</sup> Tejerina, Á., “Tres modos de orar”, *Man* 69, (1997), 65.

- Fácil de decir, como si él solo se repitiera mecánicamente.
- Adaptado a quien lo emplea.
- Viene espontáneamente, no es provocado artificialmente.
- Ha de poder repetirse suavemente al compás de la respiración<sup>193</sup>.

The most important mantras used to practice the Nāma Japa prayer are the following:

## 2. The Supreme Mantra of OM (AUM)

OM<sup>194</sup> in the Indian spiritual tradition is recognized as “the purest spiritual vibration, the best sound to remind one of God; the perfect symbol for the impersonal God head, the unknowable”<sup>195</sup>. According to the Hindu Scriptures, the entire phenomenal world is made up of vibrations. The whole universe has come into existence by the most subtle of vibrations i.e cosmic sound, the creative word or supreme Sound called as OM (AUM). The following is written in the Rigveda, the most ancient of all Indian Scriptures:

“In the beginning was Brahman (the un-manifest Godhead), with whom was the Word. This Word was his second. He contemplated. He said: “I will deliver this Word so that she will produce and bring into being this entire world” (Tandya Maha Brahmana, XX. 14.2).

Korkoniyas Moses, commenting on the above passage from the Rigveda, writes:

The Word or Shabda Brahman (Nadha Brahman) is the self-expression of Brahman through whom the entire universe comes into being. This Word is the primordial supreme sound, the subtle cosmic vibration. The one syllable word, OM, AUM that we pronounce is the approximate representation of this soundless Word. It is the nearest possible sound symbol for that which is beyond sound and form. From OM all letters, sounds and mantras are derived; so also this entire universe. Aum is the sound symbol of God. So it is recited as a mantra to develop God consciousness<sup>196</sup>.

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<sup>193</sup> Progoff, I., *The practice of Process Meditation*, New York 1984, 185-270 cited in Tejerina, Á., “Tres modos de orar”, 65.

<sup>194</sup> The great Sanskrit grammarian called Panini has thrown much light on OM. In the sound-combination described by him, A+U become O. Hence A+U+UM= OM. ‘O’ here is not a flat ‘O’ but a solemn ‘O’ that contains A+U in it. Cf. V.F. Vineeth. Yoga of spirituality, 5. For further discussion on AUM See V.F. Vineeth. Yoga of spirituality, 45-55; Panidiyappillil, J., “Symbolism of the Monogram OM”, *Journal of Dharma*, IX, No.2 (1984), 150-160; V.F.Vineeth., “Theology of OM”, in *Indian Christian Spirituality*, D.S. Amalorpavadass (ed.), NBCLC Bangalore 1982, 125-131.

<sup>195</sup> Korkoniyas Moses, *Yesu Nama Japam*, 60.

<sup>196</sup> Korkoniyas Moses, *Yesu Nama Japam*, 61.

### **3. The Mahamantra (The great mantra)**

The Mahamantra is “Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare; Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Hare Hare”.

It is Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu of Bengal, India, in the 16th century popularized the devotion to the Name of Hari<sup>197</sup>. He consoled the suffering saying: “Fear not, O afflicted souls, the greatest atonement for sins and the highest means for attainment of Divine Love is the practice of Sri Hari’s Name. Renouncing all worldly cravings engage yourself in this practice with firm faith and work out your salvation from bondage”<sup>198</sup>. St Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and his disciples gave a new impetus to the practice of this Mahamantra by going from door to door persuading people to recite Hari’s name.

### **4. Mahavakyas (Great Sayings)**

Mahavakyas are taken from the four Vedas which proclaim the highest state of identity between *Jivātma* and *Paramātma* - and which are employed during Jñāna Yoga meditation and also practiced as Nāma Japa. Mahavakyas are “abstract mantras meant to be used by those whose minds and lives have been purified by long God-seeking and serious *sadhana*”<sup>199</sup>. The four significant Mahavakyas<sup>200</sup> are the following:

- a. “*Aham Brahmasmi* - I am Brahman.” - affirms unity with the Absolute (*Brihad. Up.* 1- 4.1). Having realized ‘I am Brahman’ one is released from all bondage. (*Kaiv. Up.* 17.97).
- b. *Tat-Tvam-Asi* - That art Thou (*Chāndog. Up.* VI. 7) That is Brahman; the meditator, the "thou".
- c. *Prajnānam Brahma* - Consciousness is Brahma (*Ait. Up.*) .

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<sup>197</sup> Vandana writes: “Hari (Rama-Krishna). The meaning of 'Hari' is the one who steals the hearts of yogis (*Harati Yogichelansi iti Hari*) or the one who destroys sins even when remembered by a wicked. "Rama" means "He in whom the yogi's take delight (*Ramante Yiginosmin iti Ramah*)" or the supreme Brahma who is infinite consciousness and eternal Bliss, from whom the yogis derive delight. "Krishna" means "one who draws the hearts of yogis" (*Karshati yoginām manāmsi iti Krishnah*). Krish also means Existence, na means Bliss. So Krishna is the supreme Brahma in whom these aspects are combined”. Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 109-110.

<sup>198</sup> As cited in Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 108.

<sup>199</sup> Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 200.

<sup>200</sup> See Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 200-201.

d. *Ayam Ātma Brahma* - The Self is Brahma - expressing the inner intuitive experience of the meditator. (*Mānd. Up.*)

## 5. Akhanda Japa

*Akhanda Japa* in the Hindu spiritual tradition is continuous repetition of a Name of God for several hours or days in a group. The group decides to end with everyone gathering together at the end of the day to recite or sing the *mantra* together. For instance, when the group engages in *Akhanda Japa* from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m., usually end by collective praising of the Name, have an *ārati* (waving of the light - in Indian style) in front of the Lord's shrine or picture and distribute to all *prasād* (sweets offered, blessed by the Lord and shared by all in His Name at the end of a religious ceremony)<sup>201</sup>.

## 6. Sahasra Nama (A Thousand Names)

In this type of *Nāma Japa* a thousand names of God are selected to help the *sādhaka* (aspirant.) in his discipline of *Japa* (repetition) and *dhyāna* (meditation) - both of which lead a person to grow in the constant awareness of God's Presence everywhere, within and without<sup>202</sup>.

In conclusion, we can point out six reasons to show that the *Nāma Japa* is a simple Eastern prayer method that can be easily practiced by all to grow in God awareness:

1. The repetition of the Name, open to all irrespective of caste, age, sex, involves no injury to any living being.
2. It does not stand in need of any ancillary aid.
3. It does not require the intercession of any third person.
4. It can be practised at any time.
5. There are no restrictions in regard to place.
6. There are no ritualistic regulations<sup>203</sup>.

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<sup>201</sup> Cf. Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 76.

<sup>202</sup> Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 111.

<sup>203</sup> Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 106.

## 2.3 Zen

### 2.3.1 The Essence of Zen

In simple words, the essence of Zen is “the personal experience of enlightenment based on a simple life lived close to nature, and upon methods of meditation which avoid complicated rituals and abstruse thought”<sup>204</sup>. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, who was a professor of Buddhist philosophy in the Otani University, Kyoto, Japan, was probably the greatest authority on Zen Buddhism. To D. T. Suzuki, Zen is neither a philosophy nor a religion. In Zen, God is neither denied nor insisted upon. In Zen, there exists no such God as has been conceived by Judaism and Christianity<sup>205</sup>. Answering the question, is Zen a religion? D.T Suzuki categorically writes the following:

[Zen] is not a religion in the sense that the term is popularly understood; for Zen has no God to worship, no ceremonial to observe, no future to abide to which the dead are destined, and last of all, Zen has no soul whose welfare is to be looked after by somebody else and whose immortality is a matter of intense concern with some people. Zen is free from all these dogmatic and “religious” encumbrances<sup>206</sup>.

### 2.3.2 Origin, Meaning and Development of Zen Meditation

Zen Meditation originated in India and was transmitted to China where it incorporated certain elements of Taoism. Speaking about the transmission of Zen, it is observed that with the spread of Buddhism other schools such as Zen, Lamaism, Tendai, Nichiren Pure Land and Soka Gakkai came into existence<sup>207</sup>. Regarding the spread of Zen, there is legend that says that a certain Bodhidharma<sup>208</sup> from southern part of India (Kanjeevaram, Tamil Nadu) travelled to China in the 5<sup>th</sup> /6<sup>th</sup> century and spread the Zen meditation. From China Zen Buddhism spread to Korea and then to Japan<sup>209</sup>. Zen Buddhism is a meditation school of Buddhism which was

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<sup>204</sup> Goring, R (ed.), *Dictionary of beliefs & religions*, Wordsworth Editions Ltd, Hertfordshire 1995, 78.

<sup>205</sup> Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, Rider & Company, London 1969, 39. For a brief introduction on the essence of Zen, see Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 38-47.

<sup>206</sup> Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 39.

<sup>207</sup> Goring, R. (ed), *Dictionary of beliefs & religions*, 78.

<sup>208</sup> Bodhidharma is an Indian Patriarch who is believed to be the founder of Ch'an in China. He seems to have meditated in utter silence for about nine years. See Samy, Ama., *Zen: Soundless sound of one hand*, Bodhi Zendo, Kodaikanal 2015, 177.

<sup>209</sup> Samy, Ama., *Zen meditation*, 8.

founded in Japan by monks on their return from China in 12<sup>th</sup> century. Zen meditation which is called as *Zazen* in Japanese, has its origins in Zen Buddhism that is a sect of Mahayana Buddhism<sup>210</sup>.

The meaning of the word ‘Zen’ is derived from the Sanskrit word called *Dhyana* (*Jhana* in Pali language) meaning meditation or concentration. The word *Dhyana* was called in Chinese *Ch'an* or *Ch'an-na*, in Japanese as *Zen* or *Zenna* (In Korea, S<sup>h</sup>n)<sup>211</sup>.

The practice of Zen meditation can be traced back to the Buddha. However, its deeper roots are to be found in the Indian Yoga that Buddha practiced before his enlightenment. The Buddha, however, altered a few things in Yogic practice and further developed others in order to speak of a new method of meditation<sup>212</sup>. In the opinion of H. M. Enomiya Lassalle, it is practically impossible to describe with absolute certainty the historical background of the founding of Zen. The sole purpose or central objective of all Buddhist forms of meditation is not for a human person to attain extraordinary powers, but to penetrate to the core of his or her religious existence<sup>213</sup>. “Zen purposes to discipline the mind itself, to make it its own master, through an insight into its proper nature. This getting into the real nature of one's own mind or soul is the fundamental object of Zen Buddhism”<sup>214</sup>. Therefore, Zen “es una trasmisión especial fuera de toda doctrina, no se basa en palabras ni letras. Apunta directamente al corazón humano y lleva a ver la Realidad (*kensho*) y a vivir despierto (*jobutsu*)”<sup>215</sup>.

### 2.3.3 Two Sects (Schools) of Zen Buddhism

#### 2.3.3 [A] Soto Zen

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<sup>210</sup> The two main traditions, sects or divisions of Buddhism are Theravada (Hinayana) Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism. “Theravada Buddhism adheres to the strict and narrow teachings of the early Buddhist writings: salvation is possible for only the few who accept the severe discipline and effort necessary to achieve it. Mahayana Buddhism is more liberal, and makes concessions to popular piety: it teaches that salvation is possible for everyone, and introduced the doctrine of the bodhisattva (or personal saviour)”. See Goring, R. (ed.), *Dictionary of beliefs & religions*, 78.

<sup>211</sup> Cf. Samy, Ama., *Zen meditation*, 8.

<sup>212</sup> Cf. H. M. Enomiya Lassalle, *Zen meditation for Christians*, Open Court, Illinois 1974, 3.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. H. M. Enomiya Lassalle, *Zen meditation for Christians*, 3-4.

<sup>214</sup> Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 40.

<sup>215</sup> Baatz, U., *H.M Enomiya- Lassalle. Jesuita y maestro zen*, Herder, Barcelona 2005, X-XII.

Soto is a widely acclaimed school of Japanese Zen Buddhism introduced by Dogen in 1227. Soto in China was known as Tsao-tung. While living in Kyoto, the former capital of Japan, Dogen wrote his general teaching of seated meditation called as *Zazen*. Dogen, in another work called as *Shobo Genzo* proposed a combination of *Zazen*, daily labour, discipline, reading of scriptures (sutras), veneration of Buddha image as well as using *Kōans* (puzzles) occasionally as the way to obtain the Buddha nature within, and also to comprehend one's own self and the world around. In fact, Soto school, as a method of self-control, became a significant and useful aid to ordinary samurai (a Japanese warrior) and farmers. Soto is undoubtedly an important element of Japanese Buddhism and is more popular compare to Rinzai Zen<sup>216</sup>.

### 2.3.3 [B] Rinzai Zen

Rinzai Zen is another important branch of Japanese Zen Buddhism. Its origin is traced back to the Lin Chi school of Chan Buddhism that exists in China. Eisai is the one who introduced it to Japan in 1191. It had great influence on the Japanese aristocracy and samurai. It insisted on the use of a collection of *Kōans* in its temples. This school downplayed the reading of scriptures (sutras) and also the veneration of Buddha images. Rinzai Zen was in favour of seeking the Buddha nature directly by the instrumentality of *Kōans* and practical living<sup>217</sup>.

### 2.3.4 Main Goal and Methods of Zen meditation

#### 2.3.4 [A] *Satori* (Illumination): The fruit of Zen meditation

The heart of Zen is *Satori*<sup>218</sup> which signifies Illumination or Enlightenment or Awakening. *Satori* is the ultimate aim or goal of Zen meditation. D.T Suzuki writes: “At all events there is no Zen without *satori*, which is indeed the Alpha and Omega of Zen Buddhism. Zen devoid of

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<sup>216</sup> Goring, R. (ed.), *Dictionary of beliefs & religions*, 495-496.

<sup>217</sup> Goring, R. (ed.), *Dictionary of beliefs & religions*, 441.

<sup>218</sup> The origin of *Satori* “lies in the enlightenment of the Buddha himself at Bodhgaya in India in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, but in Japan it became particularly associated with Zen Buddhism”. See Goring, R. (ed.), *Dictionary of beliefs & religions*, 462.

*satori* is like a sun without its light and heat. Zen may lose its literature, all its monasteries, and all its paraphernalia; but as long as there is *satori* in it, it will survive to eternity”<sup>219</sup>.

The life of Zen begins with the “opening of *Satori*” that can be defined as “intuitive looking-into, in contra-distinction to intellectual and logical understanding”<sup>220</sup>. Buddhist sects in Japan belong to two different categories: one sect teaches deliverance through oneself, and the other teaches deliverance through the mediation of another power<sup>221</sup>. Zen pertains to the first group and promotes a meditative intuition. It is not enough to meditate liberating, absolute truth through dialectical thinking (analytical reasoning), or to believe in it as it is conveyed through words. Rather one must comprehend the truth intuitively, meaning through personal experience. *Zazen* or Zen meditation brings about this intuition, known as *satori* (enlightenment) or *Kenshō* (intuition of one's true nature). *Satori* is the experiential knowledge of the absolute oneness of all beings, the unity in which there is neither a subsisting self nor any singular thing, and thus no distinction between things. For this reason, the world revealed by enlightenment is called the "undifferentiated world" (*byōdō no sekai*), in contradistinction to the "world of differences" (*sabetsu no sekai*). The latter is the world as we perceive it through our senses, understand it through discriminating thought, and judge it according to concepts<sup>222</sup>.

H. M. Enomiya- Lassalle writes:

El proceso del satori me parece ser objetivo, pero la opinión de que se trata de una comprensión que significa que uno mismo es el todo, me parece simplemente una interpretación falsa [...], la cual, sin embargo, se explica desde la opinión budista. La finalidad del zen era la iluminación llamada de forma monista satori. Consiste en darse cuenta de que el propio yo es uno con el todo; eso sería una realidad irrefutable<sup>223</sup>.

*Satori* is attained in the state of emptiness meaning the state in which the consciousness is completely emptied. In other words, it is also called pure consciousness<sup>224</sup>. *Satori* is achieved

<sup>219</sup> Suzuki, D.T., *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, First Series, London 1958, 230.

<sup>220</sup> Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 88. To deepen the understanding of *Satori*, see Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 88-98.

<sup>221</sup> “El zen es el camino de la *jirki* (Fuerza propia), según la cual el hombre puede y debe liberarse con su propia fuerza. La secta budista llamada “de la tierra pura” sigue la vía del la *tariki* (fuerza ajena), es decir, la misericordia y la ayuda de Amida. En general los intelectuales y los militantes siguen el zen mientras que el pueblo llano pertenece a la secta Amada, es decir, “de la tierra pura”. La simplicidad del zen ha dejado su huella en el arte y cultura japonesa”. Papali, C.B., “Zen”, *Diccionario de Espiritualidad*, Herder, Barcelona 1987, 636.

<sup>222</sup> Cf. H. M. Enomiya Lassalle, *Zen meditation for Christians*, 6.

<sup>223</sup> Baatz, U., *H.M Enomiya- Lassalle, Jesuita y maestro zen*, XII.

<sup>224</sup> Cf. H. M. Enomiya- Lassalle, *Zen meditation for Christians*, 10.

through the means of concentration on breathing; the so-called *Shikantaza* (merely sitting), and the *Kōan*.

#### 2.3.4 [B] Methods of Zen Meditation (*Zazen*)

Zen strongly and persistently insists upon an inner spiritual experience. Zen refrains from giving much importance to the Sacred sutras or to their exegeses. Zen proposes the most practical method of attaining spiritual enlightenment through the practice of *Dhyana* (meditation) known as *Zazen*<sup>225</sup>. *Zazen* is the ordinary way of Zen meditation. *Zazen* in Japanese means sitting meditation. For in *Zazen* one strives to empty the mind completely. While practicing *Zazen* one thinks of nothing, not even the teachings of Buddhism. H. M. Enomiya Lassalle taught:

La práctica del *Zazen* es un camino que lleva al despertar, a caer en cuenta del misterio, a ‘ver’ y a personalizar esta experiencia. En la medida en que el despertar es genuino y va transformando a la persona, lleva a la compasión y la humildad. Lleva a darse cuenta de que todas las cosas fluyen, y a la vez despierta un sentido de reverencia incluso ante la más pequeña cosa. Lleva a vivir en libertad en medio de cualquier circunstancia<sup>226</sup>.

*Zazen*, in the words of Ama Samy, “is an utterly simple and wholehearted practice of just *be-ing*, in selfless openness, awareness not captured by thought or fantasy or emotion; a sadhana of embodied awareness beyond dualisms and objectifications, a pure form of worship in spirit and truth”<sup>227</sup>.

*Zazen* is practiced differently by the Soto and Rinzai schools of Zen Buddhism. The Soto school engages in *Zazen* just sitting upright, with legs crossed, focusing on the regulation of the breathing, with the correct posture of the body with a deep concentration of the mind. The ultimate aim is to achieve *Satori* by freeing the wandering mind from all attachments and desires. The Rinzai School, on the other hand, differs in its interpretation of *Zazen*. Rinzai

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<sup>225</sup> Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 34.

<sup>226</sup> Baatz, U., *H.M Enomiya- Lassalle. Jesuita y maestro zen*, XIV.

<sup>227</sup> Samy, Ama., *Zen meditation*, Ija Publications, Bangalore2006, 131.

School approaches *Zazen* by the systematic use of *Kōan* (paradoxical sayings and exercises) to attain *Satori*<sup>228</sup>.

There are basically three important means which have been utilized for over a thousand years for practicing *Zazen*. The means or methods used during *Zazen* are: the concentration on the respiration, *Shikantaza* (Just sitting) or *Kōan*. These are the basic interior attitudes required for the fruitful practice of *Zazen*. Let us briefly look into each of them.

#### **2.3.4. [B]. 1 Concentration on Respiration/ Breathing**

One can concentrate on the breathing in two manners during the practice of Zen meditation:

1. One way is by counting breaths or by being mindful of them without counting. One way to count is from 1 to 10 beginning with 1 again, and using the odd numbers for inhalation and the even numbers for exhalation.
2. Another way is to count only the inhalations or only the exhalations. To concentrate on breathing without counting, follow the breaths with the mind, being aware only of inhalation when inhaling, and only of exhalation when exhaling<sup>229</sup>.

Concentration on breathing is deemed to be an ancient method which is a very effective means of gradually excluding or getting rid of all other thoughts and attain inward serenity.

#### **2.3.4. [B]. 2 *Shikantaza* (Just sitting)**

*Shikantaza*, a Japanese word, is the ordinary way of Zen meditation (*Zazen*). It is a practice of *just being* here and now, bodily, with a deep concentration on one's breathing. It is "an utterly simple and wholehearted practice of just *be-ing*, in selfless openness, awareness not captured by thought or fantasy or emotion; a sadhana of embodied awareness beyond dualisms and objectifications, a pure form of worship in spirit and truth"<sup>230</sup>.

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<sup>228</sup> Goring, R. (ed.), *Dictionary of beliefs & religions*, 574.

<sup>229</sup> H. M. Enomiya- Lassalle, *Zen meditation for Christians*, 16.

<sup>230</sup> Samy, Ama., *Zen meditation*, 130.

### 2.3.4. [B]. 3 *Kōan*

The *Kōan* is a paradoxical question whose answer cannot be arrived at through logical thinking; it is an insoluble riddle; insoluble, because it contains a contradiction. In the understanding of a great Zen master, D. T. Suzuki, a *Kōan* is a paradoxical question, expression or action of the master.

*Kōan* literally means “a public document” or “authoritative statute”. It now denotes some anecdote of an ancient master, or a dialogue between a master or monks, or a statement or question put forward by a teacher, all of which are used as the means for opening one’s mind to the truth of Zen. In the beginning, of course, there was no *Kōan* as we understand it now; it is a kind of artificial instrument devised out of the fullness of heart by later Zen masters, who by this means would force the evolution of Zen Consciousness in the minds of their less endowed disciples<sup>231</sup>.

The following is a well-known *Kōan* which is generally the first *Kōan* given to Zen students as they commence their Zen practice.

“Has a dog Buddha- nature or not?” A monk asked Joshu<sup>232</sup> in all earnestness, Joshu replied, “Mu!” [Mu = no, not, nothing, empty]

A *Kōan* is generally handed down in the form of anecdotes by the teacher to the student for meditation<sup>233</sup>. In the opinion of H.M Enomiya-Lassalle, “Whether and how the *Kōan* is used depends not only upon the school but upon the particular Zen master as well. The fact is that most Zen disciples who attain enlightenment do so by means of the *Kōan*”<sup>234</sup>. A requirement for practicing the *Kōan* is the continual guidance of a Zen master. Only the master can decide when the disciple should pass from one *Kōan* on to the next. Occasionally the master points the way to the disciple. They read the *Kōan* together and the master offers a clarification.

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<sup>231</sup> Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 102. For a detailed study of *Kōan*, see Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 99-117.

<sup>232</sup> Master Joshu lived in Japan in the latter part of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and breathed his last towards the end of 9<sup>th</sup> Century. He used to instruct his disciples using everyday words and deeds. Cf. Samy, Ama., *Zen: Ancient and Modern*, Vaigarai Publications, Dindigul 2010, 77.

<sup>233</sup> Suzuki, D.T., *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 19-20.

<sup>234</sup> H. M. Enomiya-Lassalle, *Zen meditation for Christians*, 17.

## **Conclusion**

Greater passion for diversity-in-unity is a central characteristic of Indian culture and tradition. We come across the diversity in the spiritual tradition too as we find various forms of praying. Down the centuries all manner of experiments have been undertaken in the Eastern spiritual tradition to overcome self and be united with God, the Supreme Being. The findings of such experiments are embodied in the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen. As we have studied in this chapter, in their essence, Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen are all attuned to the same goal, namely helping human persons to enrich their divine consciousness through self-realization or awakening. Like Ignatian *Exercises*, the Eastern religions of Hinduism and Buddhism too have developed and promoted various methods for ordering one's life as well as to facilitate God experience. In the next chapter, we will highlight the significance of interfaith dialogue today and also about the contribution of some Christians who have strived hard to engage in interfaith dialogue particularly a few Jesuits who have practiced and propagated Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen by incorporating them during the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*.

# CHAPTER 3

## IGNATIAN SPIRITUAL EXERCISES AND EASTERN PRAYER METHODS

### Interfaith Dialogue and Practice

#### **Introduction**

After having gone through briefly about the essence of Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen, let us in this chapter focus on the relevance of interfaith dialogue and the practice of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen during the Ignatian *Exercises*. While addressing the delegates of 35<sup>th</sup> Jesuit General Congregation on 21st February 2008, Pope emeritus Benedict XVI said: “The [*Spiritual*] *Exercises* are the fountain of your spirituality and the matrix of your *Constitutions*, but they are also a gift that the Spirit of the Lord has made to the entire Church: it is for you to continue to make it a precious and efficacious instrument for spiritual growth of souls, for their initiation to prayer, to meditation, in this secularized world in which God seems to be absent”<sup>235</sup>. Drawing inspiration from the above exhortation, in this chapter, we shall engage in a dialogue with Eastern prayer methods with the intention of enriching the prayer experience during the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* by practicing the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen. Thus making the Ignatian *Exercises* an efficacious instrument for spiritual growth of souls today.

#### **3.1 The Relevance of Interfaith dialogue today**

In a multi- religious societies, interfaith dialogue<sup>236</sup> among various religious groups is indeed a way of life. Interfaith dialogue is relevant for the fact that God reveals Himself in various

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<sup>235</sup> Padberg, W. J., *Jesuit life and Mission Today, the decrees of the 31st-35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, 825.

<sup>236</sup> Leonard Swidler in collaboration with Ashok Gangadean, has outlined the “Seven Stages of Deep Dialogue” to describe the potential for dialogue leading to transformation. The seven stages are: (1) Radical encountering of

cultures and religious traditions. However, “dialogue can be genuine and effective only if both partners are deeply rooted in their respective faith experience and become acquainted with the basics of the other’s religion”<sup>237</sup>.

In religious dialogue today, mutual understanding, though always necessary, is insufficient; going beyond mutual understanding, interfaith dialogue must be concerned with the mutual transformation of the religions involved. Then and only then will a deep and expansive human spirituality be opened up before each of the world's religions<sup>238</sup>.

Religious fundamentalism and communalism is rampant all over the globe in recent times. They not only cause frustrating disagreement within the given religion, but also create an obstacle to interfaith dialogue<sup>239</sup>. Nowadays, “religions are increasingly in conflict everywhere. Such conflicts are caused by religious fundamentalism, and by communalism which makes use of religion as political tool. People are searching for their identity. In such a situation dialogue between religions has become urgent and imperative”<sup>240</sup>. Interfaith dialogue is indeed paramount for a peaceful co-existence of people that belong to various faiths because “without deep mutual understanding among world religions a harmonious global society can never be established”<sup>241</sup>. Therefore it is felt that “as we relate to the Other [God], so we tend to relate to the other [human beings], whether it be the intimate other or the distant other. Prayer is a story of relationship to God and hence will influence the other stories with which humans make sense of their lives”<sup>242</sup>. The Asian Bishops, speaking of prayer, said:

Sustained and reflective dialogue with them [people of other religious traditions] in prayer (as shall be found possible, helpful and wise in different situations) will reveal to us what the Holy

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difference, (2) crossing over-letting go and entering in the world of the other, (3) inhabiting and experiencing the world of the other, (4) crossing back with an expanded vision, (5) the dialogical awakening (6) the global awakening, and (7) personal and global transforming of life and behaviour”. Cf. <http://dialogueinstitute.org/seven-stages-of-deep-dialogue/> accessed on 02.03.2016. For some guidelines on interfaith dialogue, See Amaladoss, M., *Walking Together, The Practice of Inter-Religious Dialogue*, GSP, Anand 1992; Amaladoss, M., *Mission Today, CIS*, Rome 1989, 95-122.

C.B.C.I. Commission for Dialogue and Ecumenism, *Guidelines for Inter-religious Dialogue*, Second Revised Edition, C.B.C.I. Centre, New Delhi 1989. (See also Appendix 1).

<sup>237</sup> Federation of Asian Bishop’s Conferences Documents from 1192 to 1996 (FABC), published in Franz-Josef Eilers (ed.), *For all the peoples of Asia, Volume 2*, Claretian Publications, Manila 1997, 158

<sup>238</sup> Abe, M., *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue (Part I)*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu 1995, 5.

<sup>239</sup> Abe, M., *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue (Part I)*, 4

<sup>240</sup> Amaladoss, M., “Double Religious Belonging and Liminality”, *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection (VJTR)* No. 1, (2002), 33.

<sup>241</sup> Abe, M., *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue (Part I)*, 4.

<sup>242</sup> Greeley, A. M., *Religion as poetry*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, NJ and London, 1995, 159 in: Baesler, E. J., “The Prayer of the holy name in eastern and western spiritual traditions: A theoretical, cross-cultural, and intercultural prayer dialogue”, 197.

Spirit has taught others to express in a marvelous variety of ways. These are different perhaps from our own, but through them we too may hear His voice, calling us to lift our hearts to the Father<sup>243</sup>.

Edward Schillebeeckx opines that today as followers of Jesus “podemos y debemos decir que hay más verdad en el conjunto de todas las religiones que en una religión aislada”<sup>244</sup>. Hence in the recent decades the universal Church and in particular the Society of Jesus have given prime importance to the interfaith dialogue.

### **3.2 The Church's teaching on Interfaith Dialogue**

The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in the religions of the eastern spiritual tradition. Declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions, *Nostra Aetate* says:

In Hinduism, men contemplate the divine mystery and express it through an inexhaustible abundance of myths and through searching philosophical inquiry. They seek freedom from the anguish of our human condition either through ascetical practices or profound meditation or a flight to God with love and trust. Again, Buddhism, in its various forms, realizes the radical insufficiency of this changeable world; it teaches a way by which men, in a devout and confident spirit, may be able either to acquire the state of perfect liberation, or attain, by their own efforts or through higher help, supreme illumination. Likewise, other religions found everywhere try to counter the restlessness of the human heart, each in its own manner, by proposing "ways," comprising teachings, rules of life, and sacred rites. The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions (NA 2).

The Second Vatican Council has repeatedly asked the Christians to make interreligious dialogue an apostolic priority. Dialogue must be practised not only at the level of cooperation in humanitarian tasks (AA 27; AG 12; GS 92) but also be a common search for socio-cultural, moral and spiritual enrichment (NA 5; AG 18). Hence the Council urges the Christians “to recognize, preserve, and foster the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among the followers of other religions through conversations and collaboration

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<sup>243</sup> Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference, *Evangelization in Modern day Asia*, Nos. 14-15, in *For All the People's of Asia*, IMC, Manila 1984, 61.

<sup>244</sup> Schillebeeckx, E., *Los hombres, relato de Dios*, Sígueme, Salamanca 1994, 254.

with them, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life” (NA 2).

Decree on the mission activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes*, too calls for deeper reflection on how Christian religious life could dialogue and incorporate that which is helpful for ascetic and contemplative life.

Religious institutes, working to plant the Church, and thoroughly imbued with mystic treasures with which the Church's religious tradition is adorned, should strive to give expression to them and to hand them on, according to the nature and the genius of each nation. Let them reflect attentively on how Christian religious life might be able to assimilate the ascetic and contemplative traditions, whose seeds were sometimes planted by God in ancient cultures already prior to the preaching of the Gospel (AG 18).

We come across since the time of Second Vatican Council, a progressive opening of the universal Church to other religious traditions. The Catholic Church is steadily moving “from a negative assessment of other religions to (...) accept the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in them. Dialogue with other religions also has become official policy”<sup>245</sup>. Commenting upon the impact and the outcome of the teaching of the Second Vatican Council regarding the interfaith dialogue with a special reference to Indian scenario, Michael Amaladoss, writes:

Over the last twenty-five years some Christians in India have discussed, favourably, the possibility of using the scriptures of other religions, not only in private prayer, but also in official worship and also the possibility of sharing worship with the members of other religions in both directions. Use of Asian techniques of *sadhana* or spiritual effort like the yoga, zen, Vipasana, etc., have become common, not only among Asians but among Christians all over the world, in spite of official reservations. Though for various reasons the official Church has not been able to go beyond, inviting members of different religions to come together to pray for peace in Assisi (1986) and in Rome (2000 and 2002) goes in the same direction. Live-together in which people of different religions read their various scriptures together, share their thoughts and problems and pray together, have been regular in various parts of India after the Vatican Council<sup>246</sup>.

Interfaith dialogue is fundamental for the Church, which is called to collaborate in God's plan with its methods of presence, respect, and love towards all persons. For the Church, dialogue is based on the very life of God, one and triune. God is the father of the entire human

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<sup>245</sup> Amaladoss, M., “Double Religious Belonging and Liminality”, 33.

<sup>246</sup> Amaladoss, M., “Double Religious Belonging and Liminality”, 33.

family. Christ has joined every person to himself and the Spirit works in each individual (RH 13). Dialogue is also based on love for the human person as such, who is the primary and fundamental way of the Church (RH 14). This friendly relationship among believers of various religions is born of respect and love for one another; it presumes the exercise of fundamental freedom to practice one's own faith completely and to compare it with that of others (RH 12). Therefore the apostolic letter *Orationis Formas* teaches the following:

The majority of the *great religions* which have sought union with God in prayer have also pointed out ways to achieve it [...] *one can take from them what is useful so long as the Christian conception of prayer, its logic and requirements are never obscured*<sup>247</sup>. It is within the context of all of this that these bits and pieces should be taken up and expressed anew. Among these one might mention first of all that of the humble acceptance of a master who is an expert in the life of prayer, and of the counsels he gives. Christian experience has known of this practice from earliest times, from the epoch of the desert Fathers. Such a master, being an expert in "*sentire cum Ecclesia*," must not only direct and warn of certain dangers; as a "spiritual father," he has to also lead his pupil in a dynamic way, heart to heart, into the life of prayer, which is the gift of the Holy Spirit (OF 16).

Pope Francis too has constantly and consistently evinced keen interest to promote interfaith dialogue. There are new creative initiatives to promote a sincere dialogue among various religions<sup>248</sup>. Pope Francis writes in *Misericordiae Vultus*:

I trust that this Jubilee year celebrating the mercy of God will foster an encounter with these religions and with other noble religious traditions; may it open us to even more fervent *dialogue* so that we might know and understand one another better; may it *eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect*, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination (MV 23)<sup>249</sup>.

People of all faiths can learn from one another and incorporate that which is useful for the spiritual growth. For instance “the use of methods of concentration and prayer such as those popularized by Yoga, Zen, Vipasana, Nama japa, and of traditional religious symbols, may lead religious minded people to very deep levels of prayers”<sup>250</sup>. A dialogue between several religious traditions which transcends mutual understanding to mutual challenge and thus mutual enrichment of each other is feasible.

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<sup>247</sup> Emphasis mine

<sup>248</sup> See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6FfTxwTX34> accessed on 25.04.2016.

<sup>249</sup> Emphasis mine.

<sup>250</sup> C.B.C.I. Commission for Dialogue and Ecumenism, *Guidelines for Inter-religious Dialogue*, 56.

When people belonging to a particular religious tradition encounter another tradition at a certain depth and find its scriptures and spiritual practices inspiring and attractive the normal tendency is to try to integrate them into one's own tradition through a process of reinterpretation and /or adaptation. One speaks, for instance, of a 'Christian Yoga' or 'a Christian Zen'. These are techniques to quieten the mind before engaging in serious prayer or contemplation<sup>251</sup>.

Interfaith dialogue would provide an opportunity to learn positive elements in other religions. The universal Church specially the Church in Asia hold that it is necessary to be firmly rooted in one's own religion and at the same time remain open to other religions<sup>252</sup>.

### **3.3 The Society of Jesus' call for Interfaith Dialogue**

Since its inception the Society of Jesus has expressed its willingness to labour with the people of all religions. The founding fathers of the Society were bound by a special vow "to go wherever the Pope may choose to send us, whether it be among the Turks or any other non-Christians, even as far as India, or to any heretics, schismatics, or any of the faithful" (*Formula of the Institute*, 4). Showing greater allegiance to the spirit of the First Jesuits, GC 34 called upon the Jesuits to strive hard to foster the four-fold dialogue recommended by the Church:

- a. The dialogue of life, where people strive to live in an open and neighborly spirit, sharing their joys and sorrows, their human problems and preoccupations.
- b. The dialogue of action, in which Christians and others collaborate for the integral development and liberation of people.
- c. The dialogue of religious experience, where persons, rooted in their own religious traditions, share their spiritual riches, for instance, with regard to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways of searching for God or the Absolute.
- d. The dialogue of theological exchange, where specialists seek to deepen their understanding of their respective religious heritages, and to appreciate each other's spiritual values<sup>253</sup>.

GC 34 encourages all Jesuits "to move beyond prejudice and bias, be it historical, cultural, social, or theological, in order to cooperate wholeheartedly with all men and women of goodwill in promoting peace, justice, harmony, human rights, and respect for all of God's creation. This is to be done especially through dialogue with those who are inspired by religious

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<sup>251</sup> Amaladoss, M., "Double Religious Belonging and Liminality", 29.

<sup>252</sup> Federation of Asian Bishop's Conferences Documents from 1192 to 1996 (FABC), published in Franz-Josef Eilers (ed.), *For all the peoples of Asia*, 23.

<sup>253</sup> GC 34, D. 5, n. 4. In this paper, we are mainly focusing on the "the dialogue of religious experience, where persons, rooted in their own religious traditions, share their spiritual riches, for instance, with regard to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways of searching for God or the Absolute".

commitment, or who share a sense of transcendence that opens them to universal values”<sup>254</sup>. GC 34 calls upon the Jesuits to engage in dialogue of religious experience (prayer and contemplation) with both the followers of Hinduism and Buddhism, the two most prominent religions of the east.

Hindus in general welcome the Christian initiatives of dialogue. Their threefold way of spiritual growth through ardent devotion, profound meditation, and action for the welfare of all offers an integrated vision and way of life. Their profound philosophical enquiries and mystical perceptions, their noble ethical values, “ashram” heritage, and rich symbolism of popular religious practices—all open broad avenues for fruitful dialogue. In the context of social discrimination and revivalist movements, partly the result of religious ideologies, Jesuit involvement in dialogue between Hindus and Christians becomes a great imperative<sup>255</sup>.

Buddhism, in its many forms, is a major religion influencing the lives of millions of people around the world. The Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path of the Buddha propose a view of this world based on its essential inadequacy and a way of life which, through the practice of ethical discipline, wisdom, and meditation, leads to a state of inner liberation and spiritual enlightenment. Buddhism calls its followers to a selfless universal compassion for all living creatures; it has a special appeal for contemporary men and women seeking a true, personal spiritual experience. Dialogue with Buddhists enables Christians to join hands with them to face the basic frustration so many feel today and to address together problems of justice, development, and peace; in addition, it invites Christians to rediscover the contemplative riches within their own tradition<sup>256</sup>.

Responding to the call of the universal Church and the Jesuit General Congregation, a few Christians particularly a handful of Jesuits have been the active practitioners and propagators of the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen especially through their teaching and writings.

### **3.4 Prominent Christian Practitioners and Propagators of Eastern Prayer Methods**

Some Christians might raise the following question: “why should a Christian practice Eastern prayer methods particularly Yoga and Zen that have their origin in Hinduism and Buddhism that are non- Christian religious traditions?” The fitting response of J.M. Dechanet would be as below:

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<sup>254</sup> GC 34, D. 5, n. 2.

<sup>255</sup> GC 34, D. 5, n. 14.

<sup>256</sup> GC 34, D. 5, n. 15.

Los indios no han inventado nada. Han descubierto simplemente un principio universal, un fenómeno que vale para todo ser compuesto de cuerpo y alma. Este principio, este fenómeno, es la repercusión que ciertos gestos y actitudes impuestos al cuerpo, elemento material, tienen sobre el elemento espiritual del hombre, sobre su alma intelectual, sobre su espíritu amante. Han descubierto que inmovilizando el cuerpo, por ejemplo, se llega a calmar el alma; que estabilizando el cuerpo, se controla mejor el espíritu; que reposando verdaderamente el cuerpo, se despliega más libremente el alma y la inteligencia; que alimentando bien el cuerpo, haciéndole absorber el máximo de energías vitales, contenidas en el aire, la luz solar, el agua, se fortalece el espíritu; que desarrollando en buena forma el cuerpo, se le hace al alma más fácil la oración y la búsqueda de Dios<sup>257</sup>.

Christian practitioners after having engaged in a dialogue with the Eastern prayer methods particularly some Jesuits strongly feel the need of practicing Yoga<sup>258</sup>, Nāma Japa and Zen and urge the Christians to practice them to enhance the Christian prayer experience. Christian attitude towards other religions really matters a lot while engaging in an interfaith dialogue. Many Christians have entered other religious traditions with open mind, without any prejudice and bias and have come out enriching their prayer experience. The following are prominent Christians who have practiced and propagated Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen.

### **3.4.1 Prominent Propagators of the Practice of Yoga**

Some of the prominent Christians who have practiced and promoted Yoga through their writings are J. M Dechanet O.S.B who is touted to be the Father of Christian Yoga and Mircea Eliade<sup>259</sup>. J. M Dechanet wrote promoting the practice of Yoga:

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<sup>257</sup> Dechanet, J. M., *Yoga Cristiano en diez lecciones*, 34-35.

<sup>258</sup> William Macwan, an Indian Jesuit strongly feels that the Christians need to give a serious thought to the practice of Yoga. “There have been heated debates about whether we, Catholics, can practice yoga which is ‘Hindu’. With the modern means of ‘communication’ our world is becoming smaller and smaller now and time has come when we should rise above the narrow and suffocating boundaries of caste, creed, colour, gender/outdated denominational teaching etc if we want to fit in the modern world. Though we strongly hold that spiritual matters cannot be subjected to laboratory tests for its authenticity, we must obey and practice in life only teaching/dogma/injunction that stands the test of reason and logic. Another criterion will be whether what is taught/ recommended is beneficial to our physical and spiritual welfare, irrespective of its origin. Once upon a time the Goan Catholics were not eating curds (dahi) and daal because both these food items were considered ‘hindu’. The same principle applies also to practicing Yoga. Obviously, since it had its origin in India, there are some Indian cultural elements in it, which apparently are not strictly speaking (Hindu) religious. So there should be no objection in accepting them. On the contrary, we must appreciate them and develop high regard for them. In our Indian situation regard for the religious beliefs which are different from mine is a must and an urgent need if we want to enjoy peace and progress in the country. Every religion existing in the world has produced great human figures like Mother Teresa, Matma Gandhi, Abdul Kalam Azad . . . Let’s listen to and imitate our Holy Father, Pope Francis, who is so eager to promote religious harmony in the world”: Macwan, W., “Why to mix Yoga with religion?”, *Jivan*, September (2015), 29.

<sup>259</sup> See his well-known work: Eliade, M., *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*; This book deals with the full exposition of the theory and practices of Yoga presenting at length the history of its forms as well as defining its place in

El Yoga hace «hombres más hombres» (...) Hombres cuyas energías físicas, intelectuales, espirituales, alcanzan un nivel superior. Les ayuda a ser mejores cristianos. Y todo esto simplemente porque sus prácticas, tan extrañas para el profano, van ordenadas al equilibrio de lo que en cada uno determina su ser y condición de hombre. En la medida en que perfeccionan su naturaleza, abren como un camino entre muchos otros- para la gracia del Todopoderoso<sup>260</sup>.

### 3.4.2 Prominent Propagator of the Practice of Nāma Japa

Vandana Mataji, a Catholic nun who heads the Christian ashram *Jiva Dhara*, in Rishikesh, at the foothills of the Himalayas has promoted an integration of Hinduism into Christian spirituality. Vandana has emphasized the role of japa-yoga as a spiritual bridge between Hinduism and Christianity. She encourages specially Christians to practice Nāma Japa in her book called *Nāma Japa*<sup>261</sup>. Vandana writes:

Bringing together Christians (of both India and the West) and Hindus - both of whose traditions use the Prayer of the Name. Christians who are familiar with the Jesus Prayer may be glad to discover the beauties of Japa Yoga of India. Hindus will be happy to find in the Eastern Christian tradition of "ceaseless prayer" much of what they possess and practise in their Nāma Sādhanā (spiritual practice of the Name). Prayer of the Name (...) will become a 'Hindu-Christian meeting point', for surely it is at this level - 'of the prayer of the heart' - that the truest interfaith dialogue can take place<sup>262</sup>.

In India, among others, Bede Griffiths, OSB Cam, of the well-known Christian Ashram 'Shanti Vanam' situated in Tamilnadu has contributed much to spread and popularize the prayer of Jesus<sup>263</sup>.

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Indian spirituality as a whole. Many Christians have studied Yoga in depth and have shown that the Christian prayer can be enriched by the practice of Yoga. See Dechanet, M. J., *Yoga Cristiano en diez lecciones*; V.F. Vineeth, *Yoga of Spirituality*;

<sup>260</sup> Dechanet, J. M., *Yoga Cristiano en diez lecciones*, 36.

<sup>261</sup> I have encountered a very limited literature on the prayer method of Nāma Japa. I have so far come across just two books and some articles which discuss Nāma Japa in depth. See Vandana, *Nāma Japa*; Korkoniyas Moises, *Yesu Nama Japam*, Claretian Communications, Chennai 2014; Anand, S., "The prayer of name in the Hindu tradition"; Baesler E. J., "The prayer of the holy name in Eastern and western spiritual traditions: A theoretical, cross-cultural, and intercultural prayer dialogue, 197- 216; Painadath, S., "Jesus Prayer and Jesuit Spirituality", *Ignis*, XLV, No.1, (2015), 14-34.

<sup>262</sup> Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, xi.

<sup>263</sup> Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 151.

### **3.4.3 Prominent Propagator of the Practice of Zen**

H. M. Enomiya Lassalle, a famous Jesuit Zen Master, always strived hard to deepen his Christian faith as help fellow Christians to incorporate Zen insights into their prayer.

[H. M. Enomiya Lassalle] siempre permaneció y cultivó una relación profunda con Jesucristo a la vez que cuidaba el *zazen* tal como él lo había recibido. Procedió siempre con gran responsabilidad y humildad, con fidelidad a su fe cristiana y al Zen, cuyo tesoro espiritual lo cautivaba. Intentó ayudar a superar el temor de unos a perder su fe cristiana por practicar *zazen*, y la tendencia de otros a considerar todas las religiones son lo mismo. Caminaba por la cresta de una montaña entre dos mundos<sup>264</sup>.

Admiring Hugo M. Enomiya-Lassalle and calling him a model for interfaith dialogue, Ignacio Echániz writes:

Readiness to listen and learn from the followers of other religions is an essential condition for inter-religious dialogue. Hugo M. Enomiya-Lassalle did this to an outstanding degree. He submitted himself to the demanding discipline of Zen, made himself a disciple of the great Japanese masters and spread tirelessly throughout the West what Christian can learn from Zen, thus preparing the ground for a genuine inter-religious dialogue<sup>265</sup>.

H. M Enomiya-Lassalle tried his level best to put into practice the teaching of the Vatican Council II as well as the Jesuit General Congregations<sup>266</sup>. Enomiya-Lassalle was instrumental along with the other Jesuits of the university of Sofia, Tokyo, in the redaction of the article 18 of the Second Vatican Council's decree on the mission activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes*<sup>267</sup> that urged the Catholics to “assimilate the ascetic and contemplative traditions, whose seeds were sometimes planted by God in ancient cultures already prior to the preaching of the Gospel” (AG 18). It should be noted here that it was highly impossible for a Christian to practice Zen till the Second Vatican Council<sup>268</sup>.

The document *Lumen Gentium* suggests that “whatever good is in the minds and hearts of men, whatever good lies latent in the religious practices and cultures of diverse peoples, is

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<sup>264</sup> Baatz, U., *H.M. Enomiya- Lassalle. Jesuita y maestro zen*, XIII-XI. See also *H.M Enomiya- Lassalle. Zen y mística cristiana*, Paulinas, Madrid 1991, 5-6.

<sup>265</sup> Echániz, I., *Jesuits at Prayer*, GSP, Anand 1996, 66.

<sup>266</sup> Baatz, U., *H.M. Enomiya- Lassalle. Jesuita y maestro zen*, X.

<sup>267</sup> Baatz, U., *H.M. Enomiya- Lassalle. Jesuita y maestro zen*, X.

<sup>268</sup> Cf. Baatz, U., *H.M Enomiya- Lassalle. Jesuita y maestro zen*, 4.

not only saved from destruction but is also cleansed, raised up and perfected unto the glory of God, the confusion of the devil and the happiness of man” (LG 17). These words of *Lumen Gentium* indeed made the Catholic Church to appreciate the values of other non-European cultures and religions. The document made possible for some of the Catholics like Jesuit priest H. M Enomiya- Lassalle to engage in interreligious dialogue by practicing and propagating Buddhist Zen<sup>269</sup>. H. M. Enomiya- Lassalle “quería transmitir la práctica del Zen a los cristianos como una senda hacia la paz interior y hacia una oración más profunda”<sup>270</sup>.

### **3.4.4 Other Prominent Jesuit Propagators of the Practice of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen**

There are a number of Jesuits who as ardent practitioners and propagators of Eastern prayer methods have contributed enormously particularly for the interfaith dialogue between Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and Eastern prayer methods of Yoga<sup>271</sup>, Nāma Japa and Zen. It is suffice here to just mention a few names and their writings. For instance, Korkoniyas Moses is a Jesuit of Kolkata (Calcutta) province and is the director-Guru of *Dhyana Vanam* ashram at Dindigul near Madurai guiding people into yoga meditation and integrated Indian and Christian spirituality. He gives Yoga retreats abroad and in different parts of India. Korkoniyas Moses has integrated Christian, Yogic and Buddhist meditations. He has recently authored a booklet on Nāma Japa called “*Yesu Nama Japam*”<sup>272</sup>.

Apart from H. M Enomiya-Lassalle<sup>273</sup>, there are several other well-known Jesuit Zen masters who have made a genuine attempt to dialogue and incorporate the insights of Zen meditation during the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*. The following are some of the distinguished Jesuit Zen masters and writers: William Johnston, an Irish Jesuit, a professional writer and an active participant in the Christian/Buddhist dialogue<sup>274</sup>, J.K. Kadawaki<sup>275</sup>, a Japanese Jesuit,

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<sup>269</sup> Cf. Baatz, U., *H.M Enomiya- Lassalle. Jesuita y maestro zen*, 5.

<sup>270</sup> Baatz, U., *H.M Enomiya- Lassalle. Jesuita y maestro zen*, 80.

<sup>271</sup> Some articles on Yoga and Ignatian Spirituality, see the entire issue of *Ignis*, XLV, No.1, (2015). For a comparative study of Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen, see <https://www.cristianismejusticia.net/files/eies42.pdf> and <http://www.theway.org.uk/Back/s103Melloni.pdf> accessed on 24.03.2016.

<sup>272</sup> See Foot note n. 262.

<sup>273</sup> Enomiya Lasalle, H.M., *Zazen y los Ejercicios de San Ignacio*, Paulinas, Madrid 1985.

<sup>274</sup> See Johnston, W., *Christian Zen*, Fordham University Press, New York 2000<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>275</sup> Kadawaki, J.K., *Zen and the Bible*, Orbis book, New York 2002; the third part of the book deals with the *Spiritual Exercises* and a Zen Sesshin, 127-179.

was brought up within a Zen Buddhist tradition and later became a Jesuit priest. In India, Ama Samy<sup>276</sup>, a Jesuit of Madurai province, has a Zen centre called *Bodhi Zendo* in Kodaikanal and he too has published many books on Zen.

We shall analyse in the subsequent sections in some detail about the outcome of the interfaith dialogue and the practice of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen today specially during the time of Ignatian *Exercises* in the light of the personal experience and the writings of the Christian practitioners of these Eastern prayer methods.

### **3.5 Practice of Eastern Prayer Methods Today: Outcome and Observations**

#### **3.5.1 Outcome of the practice of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen**

Korkoniyas Moses is now president of *Ashram Aikiya* (an association of about 60 Christian ashrams or places of spiritual striving for inner purification and God-experience). Korko has introduced the practice of Yoga in the West especially in Ireland giving a number of retreats countrywide employing Yoga and meditation formulated around Catholic teaching. He has visited Ireland for about seven times bringing the Yoga techniques to Catholics there. In an interview with *The Irish Catholic*, he has shared his experience:

Christians in India too are slowly opening to yoga and silent forms of meditations. The Catholic Church in India is known for its education, social and medical services, but not so much for contemplation,” he says, adding that “as well as bringing the contemplative dimension, the ashrams have brought opportunities for inculcation and inter-religious dialogue, a common point from which munities cross paths as part of everyday life.” The ashrams also have become sites of inter-religious retreats where different religious traditions have participated without any accusations of proselytism or of compromising of beliefs. Fr. Korko recalls a retreat he gave for boys of a local orphanage, representing the different faiths of India. “They had yoga, short meditations and practice of breath-awareness and repeated the name of Jesus, Allah, and Krishna according to their different religions,” he says. “That was a great success. The measure of success lies in the fact that many in religious formation in India now come to the ashrams during their studies to experience for themselves the yoga-meditation retreats. Christians in India, too, are slowly opening to yoga and silent forms of meditations.” Today, seminary and

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<sup>276</sup> Samy, Ama., *Zen Meditation for the life and death, Christians and therapists*, IJA Publications, Bangalore 2006; See the fourth part of this book that throws light on the *Spiritual Exercises* and Zen, 123-140.

religious formation includes practices of contemplation and ashram experience with training in yoga<sup>277</sup>.

Sharing about the fruit of the practice of Nāma Japa Vandana writes:

I have myself met many - mostly religious - who have at least begun to practise the prayer of Jesus, even if they did not always persevere. I find the shorter formula “Jesus mercy” or “Jesus Love” or “Jesus Lord” or even just the Holy Name has a tremendous appeal to many Indian Christians. Many in several groups of retreatants have received it as their ‘Mantra’: I know some authentic Hindu Gurus who give “Om Jesus” as a Mantra to Christians. Those who have persevered in its use with courage, fidelity and love find that gradually the act of prayer has become a state of prayer; that this continual calling on the Name has deepened their whole living. They begin not only to speak but to hear and see “only Jesus” everywhere<sup>278</sup>.

Subhash Anand, an Indian Catholic priest, writes: “I myself have been practicing the prayer of the name for some years now. My *mantra* at the moment is: ‘Abba Father, all praise to you’ ”<sup>279</sup>.

Thomas Merton, who practiced as well as wrote on Zen<sup>280</sup>, opines:

La práctica del Zen puede aportar las posibilidades para un nuevo tipo de conciencia en este mundo supermecanizado y competitivo; y piensa que las posibilidades no son grandes, pero que tal vez el nuevo interés por el diálogo interreligioso ofrezca alguna esperanza de recuperación de la “intuición del ser”, constituye la base común de las antiguas tradiciones místicas de la sabiduría, tanto orientales como occidentales<sup>281</sup>.

Recently, J.K. Kadowaki, a Jesuit Zen master, gave two retreats in Loyola, Spain (For Jesuit and religious 5 – 9, April 2016 and another for general public 10 – 17, April 2016).on the theme: ‘Zen en clave ignaciana’. One of the Jesuit participants shared about his experience:

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<sup>277</sup> Korkoniyas Moses, “Yoga and Meditation”, *Ignis*, XLV, No.1, 2015, 60.

<sup>278</sup> Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 151.

<sup>279</sup> Anand, S., “The Prayer of the Name in the Hindu Tradition”, 462.

<sup>280</sup> See the famous work of Thomas Merton on Zen: Merton, T., *El Zen y los pájaros del deseo*, Kairós, Barcelona 1972.

<sup>281</sup> Merton, T., *Escritos esenciales: Introducción y edición de Francisco R. de Pascual*, Sal Terrae, Santander 2006, 276.

El Zen es una tradición oriental que tiene que ver con la meditación. Es vasto, profundo y complejo como para intentar explicarlo en pocas líneas. Si acaso, recupero y hago síntesis de lo que aprendí en el retiro que tomé con el P. Kadowaki. El Zen tiene que ver con el arte de entrar a los propios adentros y, desde ahí, percibir el presente y la Presencia de quien nos da la vida. Es muy importante aprender a concentrarnos en la respiración, atender los sentidos y evitar ese monólogo obsesivo de pensamientos que ametralla nuestra mente. Claro, es fundamental el silencio y tener una posición corporal que ayude a la contemplación<sup>282</sup>.

### **3.5.2 Critical Observations on the Practice of Eastern Prayer Methods Today**

The Christians who would desire to incorporate these Eastern forms of praying today need to bear in mind the below mentioned observations before practicing them. First and foremost, one has to be faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ by deeply rooted in the Christian faith and the tradition of the Church. Hence the Church instructs the Christian faithful categorially through the apostolic letter *Orationis Formas*:

Many Christians today have a keen desire to learn how to experience a deeper and authentic prayer life despite the not inconsiderable difficulties which modern culture places in the way of the need for silence, recollection and meditation. The interest which in recent years has been awakened also among some Christians by forms of meditation associated with some eastern religions and their particular methods of prayer is a significant sign of this need for spiritual recollection and a deep contact with the divine mystery. Nevertheless, faced with this phenomenon, many feel the need for sure criteria of a doctrinal and pastoral character which might allow them to instruct others in prayer, in its numerous manifestations, while remaining faithful to the truth revealed in Jesus, by means of the genuine Tradition of the Church. This present letter seeks to reply to this urgent need, so that in the various particular Churches, the many different forms of prayer, including new ones, may never lose their correct personal and communitarian nature (OF 1)

Santiago Guerra writes:

Un cristiano que incorpora a su oración los métodos orientales, debe tener una clara idea del mensaje de salvación en Cristo, del amor de Dios al mundo como mundo, de la presencia de Dios en la historia humana, del Verbo encarnado como afirmación por Dios del valor de lo terreno y temporal y como principio de un mundo hacia adelante; solo así evitirá el peligro de una oración cuya final es “el silencio<sup>283</sup>.

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<sup>282</sup> See <http://entparentesis.org/silencio-respiracion-puentes-comunicacion-zen-cristianismo> (accessed on 30.04.2016)

<sup>283</sup> Guerra, S., “Yoga, Zen y Oración Cristiana”, *Revista de Espiritualidad* 35 (1976), 149.

Fr Pedro Arrupe had a wide experience and the knowledge of Eastern spiritual tradition. He recommends the following to those who desire to practice the Eastern prayer methods:

Es el recurso a los métodos orientales. Hay una gran interrogación. Pienso que podemos sacar alguna cosa; pero que un director de Ejercicios sacará poco a no ser que consagre *mucho tiempo a estudiarlos a fondo*. Para aprender estos métodos *es necesario tener un estilo de vida diferente*. Un barniz de "yoga" o de "zen" no puede bastar. Es posible que el hecho de haber vivido tanto tiempo en el Japón, me haga más excéptico. Yo he podido ver allí de cerca la utopía, después de haber comprendido y experimentado que estos métodos están íntimamente unidos y enraizados en una cultura y en un modo de vida muy distintos de los nuestros. *Exigen una inculturación profunda* que es muy difícil y mucho más en Occidente... Estos métodos, no los condeno y admito que desde el punto de vista sicológico pueden ser útiles. Lo que quiero decir es que *para aplicarlos bien no pueden bastar tres días, porque exigen años de preparación*. Espero que me comprendáis. *Se puede, pues, acudir a ellos si le ayudan a uno, pero sin exageraciones*<sup>284</sup>.

Another significant point to keep in mind before indulging in the practice of Eastern prayer methods is the following:

En la hipótesis de que alguno se decida a recurrir a los métodos del yoga o del zen habrá de estar debidamente informado sobre las exigencias interiores preliminares de tales vías y acerca del carácter subordinado (incluso a los ojos de los hindúes y budistas serios) de las prácticas exteriores. No hay zen ni yoga sin frugalidad de vida, sin dominio de las pasiones, sin no violencia sin la custodia de los sentidos sin el silencio interior y también exterior, no hay zen o yoga sin renuncia a sí mismo y sin esfuerzo virilmente perseverante. Si alguien prometiese la experiencia interior "inmediata o sin fatiga" sería un charlatán que abusa de la credulidad de los ingenuos generosos<sup>285</sup>.

### **3.6 Practice of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen during the *Ignatian Exercises***

#### **3.6.1 Ignatian Spiritual Exercises and Eastern Prayer Methods: Points of Convergence**

One encounters several commonalities between Ignatian *Exercises* and Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen because human person is fundamentally a religious being and

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<sup>284</sup> Arrupe, P., *La identidad del jesuita en nuestros tiempos*, Sal Terrae, Santander 198, 234. Emphasis mine.

<sup>285</sup> Masson, J., "Yoga/El Zen" *Nuevo Diccionario de Espiritualidad*, Paulinas, Madrid 1979<sup>2</sup>, 1454.

therefore is in search of God. There exist certain differences too due to their origin and development in a different religious contexts and traditions.

### 3.6.1 [A] Significant Role of Spiritual Director

The spiritual director plays a vital role during the Ignatian *Exercises*. The one giving the *Spiritual Exercises* has basically three roles or tasks: Firstly, the retreat director puts the method forward, with a sense of how the individual parts fit into the whole process of *Exercises*. Secondly, the director will have to ‘narrate the history faithfully [SpEx 2.1]. In other words, propose the points for prayer briefly and concisely. Thirdly, the giver of the *Ignatian Exercises* need to help the individual with the discernment of spirits<sup>286</sup>.

A *guru*<sup>287</sup> (master) in the Hindu tradition bring forth fruit in the disciple by the use of word, through looking silently and through touch<sup>288</sup>. One does not learn Yoga by oneself; the guidance of a master (*guru*) is necessary<sup>289</sup>. “Que un Yoga elemental sea un factor de equilibrio físico o síquico, es gran verdad. Para llegar más lejos, se necesita un *guru* competente”<sup>290</sup>.

The spiritual guidance and assistance from a *guru* is indeed essential while practicing Nāma Japa.

Guidance from an experienced spiritual master is the surest safeguard. The Guru's teaching and guidance in this, perhaps [...] is most essential. The Fathers of the Eastern Church as well as all spiritual masters of the Hindu tradition constantly harp on the danger of using these techniques without a spiritual guide who is himself experienced<sup>291</sup>.

Highlighting the significant role of a spiritual guide in the practice of Zen Thomas Merton writes:

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<sup>286</sup> Cf. <http://www.theway.org.uk/Back/s103Melloni.pdf> accessed on 24.03.2016.

<sup>287</sup> For a wider discussion on ‘Guru’, see V.F. Vineeth. *Yoga of spirituality*, 84-87; Vandana, *Gurus, Ashramas and Christians*, CLS, Madras 1980; Vandana, *Gurus, Ashramas and Christians*, Darton, Longman and Todd, London 1978; McMichael, D. J., “Spiritual Master in the path of Knowledge in Indian Tradition”, *The Journal of Dharma* XI, No.1 (1986), 29-36.

<sup>288</sup> Cf. <http://www.theway.org.uk/Back/s103Melloni.pdf> accessed on 24.03.2016.

<sup>289</sup> Eliade, M., *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1958, 5.

<sup>290</sup> See Regamey, *Vie Spirituelle*, Agosto 1955, 151in: Dechanet, J. M., *Yoga Cristiano en diez lecciones*, 10.

<sup>291</sup> Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, 163.

Lo seguro es averiguar qué es lo que Dios quiere, cuándo lo quiere y cómo lo quiere. Incluso en otros sistemas de espiritualidad, digamos por ejemplo en el Budismo Zen, se hace mucho hincapié en la necesidad de dirección espiritual. Para salir victoriosos contra las dificultades que nos salen al paso en el camino de la vida espiritual, hay que resignarse a empezar como principiantes y aprendices. Los que empiezan convencidos de que ya lo saben todo, están por el mero hecho condenados a no aprender nunca<sup>292</sup>.

### 3.6.1 [B] Indifference: An Essential Disposition Required

Ignatian *Exercises* have as their purpose the conquest of self and the regulation of one's life in such a way that no decision or election of state of life is made under the influence of *any inordinate attachment*. Ignatian indifference is a “preference, beyond all natural and interior attachments, for the divine order of creation which embraces all things in a movement of love and service. It is our opting for God, in all things, without giving in to the sensitive likes or dislikes which spring from our nature”.<sup>293</sup> The disordered affections can be overcome only with the help of another person<sup>294</sup>. So the giver of the *Exercises* has to offer the advice and suggestions [SpEx 7], the interpretation of the resistances and temptations [SpEx 10], and at times confront the exercitant [SpEx 6] for overcoming his or her disordered affections. One has to be a person of indifference and detachment in order to practice Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen as well.

Liberation cannot occur if one is not first "detached" from the world, if one has not begun by withdrawing from the cosmic circuit. For without doing so, one could never succeed in finding or mastering oneself. Even in its "mystical" acceptation—that is, as signifying *union-Yoga* implies a preliminary detachment from matter, emancipation with respect to the world. The emphasis is laid on man's effort ("to yoke"), on his self-discipline, by virtue of which he can obtain concentration of spirit even before asking (as in the mystical varieties of *Yoga*) for the aid of the divinity<sup>295</sup>.

Indifference and detachment are vital to practice Nāma Japa as well as Zen. However, the faithful practice of Nāma Japa and Zen would help a person to be indifferent and detached.

The repetition of the Lord's name would work in two ways:

1. One spontaneously becomes detached (*viraagi*) which enhances the stopping of mental activities, the mental restraint.

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<sup>292</sup> Merton, T., *La oración en la vida religiosa*, Mensajero, Bilbao 1970, 38-39.

<sup>293</sup> Cusson, G., *Biblical Theology and The Spiritual Exercise*, 78.

<sup>294</sup> García Domínguez, L M<sup>a</sup>., “Afección desordenada”, *DEI*, 94.

<sup>295</sup> Eliade, M., *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom* 5.

2. The Lord grants him/her all the necessary graces to realize the yogic goal, and makes up for the human frailties and inabilities<sup>296</sup>.

The first point of resemblance between the *Spiritual Exercises* and a Zen sesshin the great courage and spirit of renunciation demanded at the beginning of the *Exercises* [SpEx 189]<sup>297</sup>.

### 3.6.1 [C] Importance of Solitude and Silence

Silence and solitude are highly valued during the Ignatian *Exercise*. Hence Ignatius recommends silence and solitude right at the beginning of the *Spiritual Exercises* [SpEx 20].

By withdrawing from friends and acquaintances and likewise from various activities that are not well ordered, in order to serve and praise God our Lord, we gain much merit in the eyes of the Divine majesty [...] the more we keep ourselves alone and secluded, the more fit do we make ourselves to approach and attain to our Creator and Lord; and more we unite ourselves to him in this way, the more do we dispose ourselves to receive graces and gifts from his divine and supreme goodness.

Nowadays, a young Christian novice or even grown up religious find extremely difficult to concentrate during prayer<sup>298</sup>. “The Buddhist and Hindu novices are comparatively better trained in silencing and controlling the mind. The Christian religious, with their stress on wordy prayers and ceremonies is prone to neglect this aspect of silencing the external and internal layers of his/her being. But without this silencing no proper concentration possible”<sup>299</sup>. The Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen too emphasize on the need of silence and solitude. The practice of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen also facilitate interior silence and solitude.

In the art of yogic spirituality ‘silencing’ is a process that takes man further and further to the interior layers of his own consciousness. The practical process itself begins from the most external layer of our being, the atmosphere. A silent and serene atmosphere is greatly conducive to meditation<sup>300</sup>.

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<sup>296</sup> Kochumuttom, T., “A Christian reading of Patañjali’s Yoga- sutra”, *Journal of Dharma* 35, No. 3, (2010), 242.

<sup>297</sup> Kadowaki, J.K., *Zen and the Bible*, 131.

<sup>298</sup> V.F. Vineeth., *Yoga of spirituality*, 133.

<sup>299</sup> V.F. Vineeth, *Yoga of spirituality*, 133.

<sup>300</sup> V.F. Vineeth, *Yoga of spirituality*, 118.

Consistent and prolonged practice of Nāma Japa will normally lead to a deeper inner silence. This silence will come naturally. This is the gateway to contemplation [...]. After a prolonged japa one may also move into types of meditation that can lead one to deeper silence<sup>301</sup>.

A Zen *sesshin* is usually held at a Zen *dojo*, in a secluded wooded area. The monk practitioners confine themselves to the innermost Zen hall of the temple for seven days and, cutting off all communication with the outside world, devote themselves to zazen. Silence is strictly observed and the mind is quieted interiorly as well<sup>302</sup>.

### 3.6.1 [D] Focus on Body Posture and Respiration

The *Spiritual Exercises* speaks of body and soul not in a dualistic manner. The body plays an important role in the spiritual process. We can cull out several instructions of Ignatius in the Additional Directions with regards to body [SpEx 73-86].

The East and West understand the human person in quite different ways. The *Spiritual Exercises*, following the western conventions, see the human person in terms of two realities: Body and psyche (soul). The East speaks of three realities: body, psyche and spirit. This difference leads a quite contrasting understanding s of spiritual growth<sup>303</sup>.

To a 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian spiritual writer, Theophane the Recluse, the definition of prayer is “breathing in the Spirit”<sup>304</sup>. T. Spidlik writes: “The early Christian ascetics used to say: Praying isn’t something that another person can teach you; you teach yourself to pray. It is a vital experience, like breathing”<sup>305</sup>.

Buddhists speak about one-pointed mind (*cittasekagrata*). Christians and Buddhists both realize that without concentration, without abandoning distracting thoughts, prayer and meditation will not bear fruit. Concentration and devotion bring calm, peace, stability, and comfort to both Buddhists and Christians<sup>306</sup>.

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<sup>301</sup> Korkoniyas Moses, *Yesu Nama Japam*, 111.

<sup>302</sup> Kadowaki, J.K., *Zen and the Bible*, 131.

<sup>303</sup> <http://www.theway.org.uk/Back/s103Melloni.pdf> accessed on 24.03.2016.

<sup>304</sup> As mentioned in Spidlik, T., “Teaching them how to pray in the Exercises”, *CIS*, 68.

<sup>305</sup> Spidlik, T., “Teaching them how to pray in the Exercises”, *CIS*, 68.

<sup>306</sup> Thich Nhat Hanh writes introducing the book: Merton, T., *Contemplative prayer*, Image book, New York 1996, 5.

### **3.6.2 Ignatian Spiritual Exercises and Eastern Prayer Methods: Points of Divergence**

It is important to grasp the basic difference between the Eastern and Western spirituality to point out the differences between Ignatian *Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods. The fundamental difference lies in their approach to Reality. The ultimate spiritual Reality, according to the Hindu religious tradition, is the Brahman, Subsisting Consciousness. Reality is therefore consciousness which is found in every human being. Hence the Hindu approach to Reality is principally introspective and intuitive. The eastern approach takes human person to an immanent God whereas the Western approach is more prone to a transcendent God<sup>307</sup>. “The truth is that God is both immanent and transcendent. Though Christians are more inclined to pray to a transcendent God, the Christian God is no less immanent than transcendent: God is equally transcendent and immanent”<sup>308</sup>. The below chart would summarize the approaches of the spiritual traditions of east and west to reality influencing spirituality<sup>309</sup>:

<b>EASTERN</b>	<b>WESTERN</b>
Interiorization	Exteriorization
Mystic	Scientific
Search	Research
Intuitive	Rational
Subjective	Objective
Immanent God	Transcendent God

Hence H. M. Enomiya Lassalle has observed:

Eastern methods are presently very widespread even in Christian countries and are practiced by a relatively large number of Westerners, including believing Christians. This phenomenon is in part due to the fact that for many their traditional religion has become all too "rational." This too may be a reason for the loss of interest in such Western forms of meditation as the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*<sup>310</sup>.

<sup>307</sup> Cf. V.F. Vineeth, *Yoga of spirituality*, 18-20.

<sup>308</sup> V.F. Vineeth, *Yoga of spirituality*, 20.

<sup>309</sup> V.F. Vineeth, *Yoga of spirituality*, 20.

<sup>310</sup> H. M. Enomiya Lassalle, *Zen meditation for Christians*, 14.

We shall now look at some of the major differences that we encounter mainly with Yoga and Zen.

### 3.6.2 [A] Presence and absence of relationship with God

As we seen in the first chapter, The *Spiritual Exercises* [SpEx 23] highlights the Ignatius' conception of God, the universe, and the human person. Ignatius firmly believed that God is the principle and foundation of the creation. All that exists in universe have their origin in God. In other words, all things proceed from God. God in whom Ignatius believed is a God is at work [SpEx 236] in the universe.

On the other hand, Patañjali's Yoga is not "directly oriented to a personal God in view, it is by no means against developing a devotional love to a personal God"<sup>311</sup>. Patañjali is really not bothered about "the type of God one is coming to, but the state of consciousness one has to pass through in one's process of a deeper realization of the self. Speaking about the concept of God, H. M. Enomiya Lassalle writes succinctly:

Nowhere does Buddhism speak of a personal God in the Christian sense of the word. The question has even been raised whether Buddhism is a religion at all. But anyone intimate with Buddhism as a living and practiced teaching will not doubt that it is indeed a religion. Since there are no assumptions about a personal God, Buddhism cannot really speak of a creation or a revelation. Nor can the Christian concept of sin as a transgression of divine will be found in Buddhism. Similarly, concepts like grace and the supernatural, as familiar as they are to Christians, have no place in the religion of the Buddha. But the concept of redemption or deliverance, closely linked to these others, is of profound significance for our study. For the way of enlightenment in Zen Buddhism is the way to deliverance. Buddhist sense of deliverance signifies the liberation from suffering and the eradication of the desires which cause suffering. This signification is based upon the Fourfold Noble Truth which the Buddha taught: First, life consists entirely of suffering. Second, suffering has a cause, namely, desire .Third, the cause of suffering can be eradicated. Fourth, the way to eradicate suffering is the Eightfold Path. The Buddha also taught an Eightfold Path: right views, right thinking, right speaking, right action, right motive, right endeavor, right mindfulness, right concentration or meditation<sup>312</sup>.

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<sup>311</sup> V.F. Vineeth, *Yoga of spirituality*, 169.

<sup>312</sup> H. M. Enomiya Lassalle. *Zen meditation for Christians*, 4.

### **3.6.2 [B] Presence and absence of imagination**

Another significant difference between Ignatian *Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga and Zen are the presence and absence of Imagination. Javier Melloni points out the difference clearly:

La pedagogía ignaciana consiste en utilizar la actividad afectiva, imaginativa y mental para urgírlas de Evangelio. En el Yoga y en el Zen, en cambio, se opta por el camino contrario: eliminar desde el comienzo toda actividad psíquica y discursiva, porque se consideran productos del ego, y por lo tanto, trampas insalvables. El planteamiento doctrinal de los EE hace que sea necesariamente dualista o, por lo menos, binario: vida-muerte; pobreza-riqueza; honor-humillación; salud-enfermedad; buen espíritu-mal espíritu, yo-tú.... Este planteamiento que, como occidentales, nos parece obvio, incluso inevitable, es precisamente el que se pretende trascender con la intuición *adváctica*, no-dual. Como la razón funciona bajo el principio de la no-contradicción y es constitutivamente binaria, tanto el Yoga como el Zen prescinden de ella. Para lograrlo, recurren a la experiencia corporal, fundamentalmente a través de la respiración, que es pre- y trans- mental<sup>313</sup>.

### **3.6.2 [C] Presence and absence of historic dimension and Social commitment**

The historic dimension and social commitment is very much part and parcel of Ignatian *Exercises*. God dwells in creatures [SpEx 235] and labours and works in all the creatures on the face of the earth [SpEx 236]. Ignatian *Exercises* enable a person to find God in all things and all things in God. Love for God ought to manifest itself more by deeds than by words [SpEx 230]. This dimension is absent in Yoga and Zen.

Lo específico de los EE es el discernimiento de una decisión. Ello configura y estructura toda una espiritualidad y un modo de concebir la experiencia de Dios y una manera de estar en el mundo. Los EE trazan el recorrido de una búsqueda, liberando las afecciones desordenadas para alcanzar la libertad que permitirá un acto libre y lúcido. Esta intención no está explicitada ni en el Yoga ni en el Zen. Se cree que la transformación que produce una práctica bien hecha llevará a tomar las decisiones adecuadas en cada caso, en la medida en que se haya disuelto el ego<sup>314</sup>.

After having looked at the essence, commonalities and differences that exist between Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods, let us now explore the possibility

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<sup>313</sup> <https://www.cristianismejusticia.net/files/eies42.pdf> (accessed on 24.03.2016).

<sup>314</sup> <https://www.cristianismejusticia.net/files/eies42.pdf> (accessed on 24.03.2016).

of incorporating or adopting the insights of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen for the enrichment of prayer experience during the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* as well as in our daily prayer life because the First Jesuits were indeed open to adopt or incorporate the new ways of praying.

La originalidad de Ignacio en la historia de la vida espiritual no reside en la introducción de nuevos métodos de oración, o en el hecho de que los Ejercicios son una vía para la unión con Dios. La originalidad de Ignacio consiste en la forma como adoptó los métodos tradicionales aprendidos en Montserrat y Manresa para llevar a las personas a la unión con Dios en el mundo. La intimidad con Dios que cultivan los "métodos" de Ignacio no es el tipo de mística nupcial desarrollada por otras escuelas, sino una mística de colaboración en la obra que Dios realiza en el mundo<sup>315</sup>.

Peter Faber, for instance, was very open-minded and enthusiastic to learn some new ways or methods of praying. Peter Faber writes:

En Ratisbona cayó en mis manos un libro de la bienaventurada virgen Gertrudis [podrían ser *Insinuationes divinae pietatis*]. En él se describen algunas devociones especiales que, durante su vida, le ayudaron a crecer espiritualmente. Aquí aprendí diversos modos de orar que me ayudaron mucho<sup>316</sup>.

On 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008, in his speech to the GC 35, then Pope Benedict XVI said: “Today I should like to encourage you and your confreres to go on in the fulfilment of your mission, in full fidelity to your original charism, in the ecclesial and social context that characterizes this beginning of the millennium... the Church needs you, counts on you, and continues to turn to you with confidence”<sup>317</sup>. Encouraged by these memorable words of Pope Benedict, the Jesuits today need carry forward the relevant mission of interfaith dialogue drawing greater inspiration from the foundational experience of the First Jesuits.

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<sup>315</sup> Barry, W. A., “Oración ignaciana”, *DEI*, 1376.

<sup>316</sup> Fabro, P., *En el corazón de la Reforma: recuerdos espirituales de Beato Pedro Fabro, SJ: Introducción, traducción y comentarios por Antonio Alburquerque*, M-ST, Bilbao-Santander 2000, 125.

<sup>317</sup> Padberg, J. W., *Jesuit life and Mission Today, the decrees of the 31st-35th General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, 822.

### **3.7 Practicing Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen during the Ignatian Exercises**

According the Apostolic letter, *Orationis Formas*, there are three kind of Christians who indulge in the practice of the Eastern forms of praying:

1. Some Christians today practice the Eastern prayer methods for therapeutic reasons.
2. A certain number of Christians seek in these methods of prayer a path to interior peace and psychic balance.
3. Other Christians, caught up in the movement towards openness and exchanges between various religions and cultures, are of the opinion that their prayer has much to gain from these methods. Observing that in recent times many traditional methods of meditation, especially Christian ones, have fallen into disuse, they wonder whether it might not now be possible, by a new training in prayer, to enrich our heritage by incorporating what has until now been foreign to it (OF 2).

We shall now explore some ways of incorporating the insights of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen during the *Ignatian Exercises*.

#### **3.7.1 Incorporation of the insights of Yoga<sup>318</sup>**

Yoga transcends all religions. People of all faiths can utilize the insights of Yoga for experience union with God.

Yoga calls attention to the spiritual oneness of all mankind. Persons belonging to different religious faiths may profitably practise yoga without abandoning their particular religious affiliations and without having to undergo any new kind of religious baptism or credal conversion (...) The basic requirement of yoga practice is the sincerity of purpose and a resolute will to carry on open-minded investigation in the realm of the spirit. It is a grievous mistake to think of yoga as a special form of religion as distinguished from other religions of the world. Every religion in its essence is regarded by a Hindu as a kind of yoga in so far as it helps man in attaining union with God or integration with existence<sup>319</sup>.

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<sup>318</sup> See the entire issue of *Ignis*, XLV, No.1, 2015.

<sup>319</sup> Chaudhuri, H., *Integral Yoga: The Concept of Harmonious and Creative Living*, 22.

So Christians too can practice Yoga especially at the time of making the Ignatian *Exercises* as a means to prepare one's body to engage in prayer.

Human experience shows that the *position and demeanor of the body* also have their influence on the recollection and dispositions of the spirit [...] In prayer it is the whole man who must enter into relation with God, and so his body should also take up the position most suited to recollection<sup>31</sup>. Such a position can in a symbolic way express the prayer itself, depending on cultures and personal sensibilities. In some aspects, Christians are today becoming more conscious of how one's bodily posture can aid prayer (OF 26).

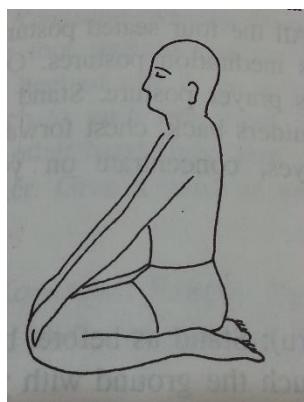
Yoga is a scientific way to bring the mind to stillness and to align the body, mind and spirit correctly. There is no worship of god or goddess involved in it and its practice can very well support Christian spirituality especially mystical theology in Christianity<sup>320</sup>

In his *Spiritual Exercises*, St. Ignatius shows himself sensitive to the role of the body and its postures as well as of breathing in prayer. He is also open to a variety of methods of prayer. Therefore we can feel free to explore the different ways in which yogic techniques can help prayer<sup>321</sup>. Therefore we can consider and incorporate some of the following *Asanas* (body postures)<sup>322</sup> as a help to pray well during the Ignatian *Exercises*<sup>323</sup>.

### Name of the Asana<sup>324</sup>

### Procedure

#### **VAJRASANA**



Kneel on the ground. Sit on the heels. Rest the hands on the middle of your thighs.

<sup>320</sup> Korkoniyas Moses, "Yoga and Meditation", 58.

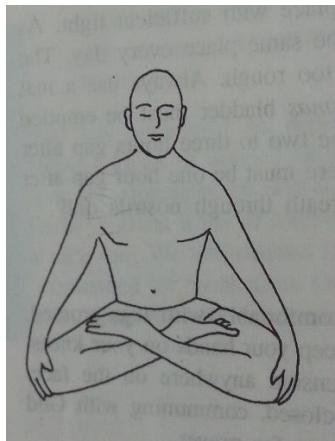
<sup>321</sup> Amaladoss, M., writes in the editorial, *Ignis*, XLV, No. 1, 2015, 6.

<sup>322</sup> I have presented here a few *Asanas* that I find useful. For more *Asanas*: See Dechanet, M. J., *Yoga Cristiano en diez lecciones*; V.F. Vineeth. *Yoga of spirituality*, 97-105.

<sup>323</sup> See Ballester, M., "Una lectura corporal de los ejercicios", *Man* 61, (1989), 147-159.

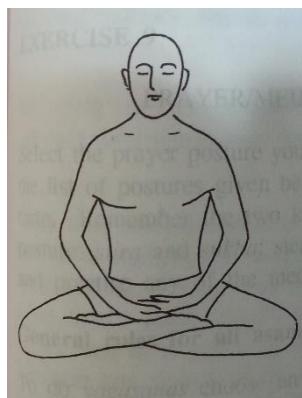
<sup>324</sup> See Ballester, M., "Una lectura corporal de los ejercicios", *Man* 61, (1989), 147-159; See V.F. Vineeth. *Yoga of spirituality*, 97-98.

## PADMASANA



Sit on the floor. Stretch the legs forward. Bend the right leg and bring the foot over the left thigh. Now bend the left leg and place the left foot on the right thigh. Keep spine erect. Keep the hands on the knees.

## SIDHASANA



Sit down with the legs straight and forward. Now bend both legs. Insert the toes of left leg between the thighs and calf muscles of the right. Take the right leg over the left and insert the toes in between the thighs and calf muscles of the left leg. Keep hands on the knees.

### 3.7.2 Incorporation of the insights of Nāma Japa

One of the classical ways to enter into contemplative prayer is by praying the Jesus Prayer. The Catechism of the Catholic Church devotes several paragraphs to the tradition of the Jesus prayer (CCC 2667- 2668). The CCC affirms in its teaching:

The name of Jesus is at the heart of Christian prayer. All liturgical prayers conclude with the words ‘through our Lord Jesus Christ’. The Hail Mary reaches its high point in the words

"blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." the Eastern prayer of the heart, the Jesus Prayer, says: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." Many Christians, such as St. Joan of Arc, have died with the one word "Jesus" on their lips<sup>325</sup>.

In the Christian oriental tradition, *Jesus Prayer* is a popular method of prayer. It is rooted in the Scriptural injunction: "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thes 5, 17). Similar injunctions are found frequently in the Bible: "in every place men should pray" (1 Tim 2, 8). "Pray at all times in the Spirit" (Eph 6, 18). To crown them all Jesus himself warned his disciples to "Watch at all times praying" (Lk 21, 36). We need to be constantly aware that the Spirit of God alone can pray in us (Rom 8,15- 16) without whom we cannot say 'Lord Jesus', and the Spirit is but ONE (1 Cor 12, 4). The prayer of the Name is the prayer of 'one-ing' and simplification. 'Father, glorify your Name' was the prayer of Jesus Our Lord (Jn12, 28)<sup>326</sup>.

We discover in the 19<sup>th</sup> century religious classic *The Way of a Pilgrim* highlights a heartfelt apologia for silent prayer that is prevalent in the Orthodox Christian tradition, namely, the "ceaseless or continual" prayer or famously known as Jesus prayer. *The Way of a Pilgrim*<sup>327</sup> is a classic work of the oriental spiritual tradition, the Russian spirituality of 19<sup>th</sup> century. It contains a transcendental message: it is the necessity of continual or ceaseless prayer. The Russian pilgrim<sup>328</sup>, with his own physical and spiritual itinerary and with the help of his *starets* which literally means "elder", "father" or "spiritual guide", offers us his guidance on how to pray continually or ceaselessly and also shows us the positive effects that the prayer of the heart causes in the soul and the body of the one who practices it.

Jesus prayer is a simple form of prayer that can be easily practiced by all. For example, "cuando estés esperando el autobús, estés en la cola del mercado, te pares ante un semáforo atrapado en el denso tráfico matutino, cuando te tomes un respiro ante el ordenador de la oficina o te levantes a estirar las piernas, cuando estés solo o sola fregando los platos (...) en estas y en otras múltiples ocasiones, vuelve todo tu ser hacia Aquel que te ha creado y que se hizo

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<sup>325</sup> CCC 435.

<sup>326</sup> Vandana, *Nāma Japa*, xii.

<sup>327</sup> I have referred the editions of Pedregosa Ordóñez, José Ignacio, *El peregrino ruso*, San Pablo, Madrid 2011.

<sup>328</sup> The author of *The Way of a Pilgrim*, is unknown and in many ways remains a mystery. No one can easily figure out whether it is a literally real story written by the narrator, or the work is the result of an account narrated in the first person by a particular pilgrim (or maybe based on several pilgrims), or even a wonderful spiritual fiction presented in a creative way with an aim to propagate a particular understanding of the practice of the Orthodox Christian faith, namely prayer of the heart, basically called as the Jesus Prayer. Cf. Pedregosa Ordóñez, José Ignacio, *El peregrino ruso*, 12.

carne para sacarte del abismo y dile: *Jesús, Hijo de Dios, ten piedad de mí, pecador*”<sup>329</sup>. So Jesus prayer is a simple method of prayer that has a universal appeal.

To Michael Amaladoss, Nāma Japa is “an easy way entering into contemplation and deep prayer, suitable to all people at all times, at work, at rest, at prayer – individually or in group. It can help us to recollect even in the midst of the contemporary noisy world (...) combined with rhythmic music, it engages body, emotions and communion with the divine”<sup>330</sup>.

As matter of fact, the Society of Jesus came into existence from the meeting of Ignatius of Loyola with Jesus of Nazareth, the Risen Lord. The name of Jesus was the driving force of the First Jesuits. Since September 1537, the First Jesuits decided to respond to those who asked their name: “We are the Society (compania) of Jesus”<sup>331</sup>. The First companions were very fond of the name of Jesus since the Society owed its origin, spirit and live to him.

The practice of Nāma Japa could be of great help during the Ignatian *Exercises* especially while going through the second week of the *Exercises* to contemplate the life of Jesus, the eternal King [SpEx 91]; to have the interior knowledge of Our Lord, who became human, to love him more intensely and follow him more closely [SpEx 104]; and thus divest oneself of self-love, self-will and self-interest [SpEx 189] and be united with Christ. “The experience of the abiding presence of Jesus the Christ is the core of Christian spirituality. With Paul one may call it Christ-consciousness. The meditative recitation of the name of Jesus is a simple but effective means for waking to Christ-consciousness”<sup>332</sup>.

By praying the name of Jesus we are united with Christ. Every invocation of the name implies a surrender to the person of Christ. The significance of this prayer consists in its simplicity, and spiritual writers have noted that by constant repetition of the name we become so united with Christ that we bear his presence within us. Gradually our identity merges with his so that even if we are not explicitly thinking of the name, the reality of the name remains impressed on our hearts. Thus the Jesus prayer can be a very effective way to fulfil the biblical injunction to pray always. As the prayer becomes ever more a part of our being, we are truly living a contemplative life, that is, we are aware of God’s presence in all the moments of our day. The long tradition of the Jesus prayer, so simple yet so profound, reminds us that contemplative prayer is not reserved to an élite but is a way of life to all Christians are called<sup>333</sup>.

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<sup>329</sup> Pedregosa Ordoñez, José Ignacio., *El peregrino ruso*, 40.

<sup>330</sup> Michael Amaladoss writes in Korkoniyas Moses, *Yesu Nama Japam*, xi.

<sup>331</sup> Jacob, P., Dillard M., *The inspirational Sources of our Jesuit Charism*, GSP, Anand 2003, 78.

<sup>332</sup> Painadath, S., “Jesus Prayer and Jesuit Spirituality”, 16.

<sup>333</sup> O'Donnell, J., *Prayer in the Catechism: an Ignatian approach*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1995, 43.

The following Biblical Mahavakyas<sup>334</sup> could be practiced regularly as *mantras* during the time of Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*:

### **Biblical Mahavakyas**

1. *The Lord is my Shepherd (Ps 23, 1)*
2. *Do not be afraid I am with you, I have called you by your name you are mine (Is 43, 1)*
3. *I am with you till the end of the world (Mt 28, 20)*
3. *You are my beloved, in you I am well pleased (Mt 17, 5)*
4. *It is not I who live, but Christ lives in me (Gal, 2, 20)*
5. *I can do all things in Him who strengthens me (Phil, 4, 13)*

“All for the greater glory of God (*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*) which captured and controlled the mind of St Ignatius”<sup>335</sup> can be practiced as *mantra* during the Ignatian *Exercises*.

Nāma Japa could be practiced “silently all by ourselves, or we can do it together as a community”<sup>336</sup>. Therefore it would be profitable during the Ignatian *Exercises* to recite the litany of the name of Jesus culled out from the Ignatius’ writings (See Appendix 2).

### **3.7.3 Incorporation of the insights of Zen<sup>337</sup>**

Enomiya- Lassalle who incorporated the insights of Zen while giving Ignatian *Exercises* says:

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<sup>334</sup> Korkoniyas Moses, *Yesu Nama Japam*, 115.

<sup>335</sup> V.F. Vineeth. *Yoga of spirituality*, 140.

<sup>336</sup> Anand, S., “The Prayer of the Name in the Hindu Tradition”, 462.

<sup>337</sup> See H.M. Enomiya Lasalle, *Zazen y los Ejercicios de San Ignacio*; Habito L.F. R., *El Zen y Los Ejercicios Espirituales*, Mensajero, Bilbao 2015; Senécal, B., “Zen y Ejercicios Espirituales”, *DEI*, 1795- 1799; López Casquete, M., “Zen y Ejercicios espirituales”, *Man* 84, (2012), 169-182; Senécal, B., “Zen et Exercices spirituels”, *Christus* 162, (1994), 226-234.

No se puede entender el Zen únicamente a través de un estudio teórico, lo he practicado también y he participado en las Meditaciones Zen. Así llegó a ser el Zen una gran ayuda para mi propia vida religiosa. Mientras más tiempo me ocupaba en él, me convencía cada vez más de que el Zen- rectamente practicado- puede ser de gran utilidad para la vida religiosa de cualquier hombre, sea cual fuere su confesión<sup>338</sup>.

By means of Zen meditation specially by using *Kōans* it is possible “to penetrate deeper into the soul. The objective is to break through the superficial or higher layers of the soul engaged in conceptual understanding, technical thinking, and conscious willing, and to release deeper energies - a natural way to prepare for Christian meditation in depth”<sup>339</sup>. One can contemplate the following biblical verses as *Kōans* during the Ignatian *Exercises*<sup>340</sup>.

### **First Week of the Spiritual Exercises**

*Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities (Ps 51,9)*

*So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth (Rev 3, 16)*

### **Second Week of the Spiritual Exercises**

*Be perfect, therefore as your heavenly Father is perfect (Mt 5, 48)*

*Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them (Jn 6, 56)*

### **Third Week of the Spiritual Exercises**

*Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited but emptied himself taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness (Phil 2, 6-7)*

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<sup>338</sup> H. M. Enomiya Lassalle, *Zen, Un camino hacia propia identidad*, Mensajero, Bilbao 1975, 9.

<sup>339</sup> H. M. Enomiya Lassalle. *Zen meditation for Christians*, 14.

<sup>340</sup> See Catret, J., “¿Dar ejercicios espirituales con “paradojas bíblicas”? a la luz de la “espiritualidad oriental”: los “koan” del zen-budismo japonés”, *Man* 65, (1993), 63-77.

*I am thirsty (Jn 19, 28)*

#### **Fourth Week of the *Spiritual Exercises***

*God is love (1Jn 4, 8)*

*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you? (1 Cor 6, 19)*

It is to be noted that just like the Ignatian third way praying, “el Zen es un camino, que puede no sea para todos, pero que indudablemente ayuda a la oración cristiana, a la madurez, a la serenidad. Y un camino de auténtica espiritualidad, de concentración en el silencio y de contemplación”<sup>341</sup>.

To conclude, it is possible for a Christian today to practice the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen without getting uprooted from his or her faith. In recent years, as we have seen in this chapter, the oriental methods of meditation and concentration have been incorporated by many Christians to enhance their prayer experience particularly while going through the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* as any praying method of the Eastern spiritual tradition is not simply a technique. It leads to a spiritual experience<sup>342</sup>.

#### **Conclusion**

The universal Church and the Society of Jesus have given a clarion call to engage in dialogue with the other religions. Eastern prayer methods can be an entry point for interfaith dialogue particularly for Christians in India. As we have highlighted in this chapter, heeding to the call of the Church and the General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, a few Christians and the Jesuits through their practice and propagation have proved that it is possible to dialogue with

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<sup>341</sup> Skrbé, F. A., “Espiritualidad de la meditación oriental la oración cristiana” *Revista de Espiritualidad* 35 (1976), 157.

<sup>342</sup> Amaladoss, M., “Double Religious Belonging and Liminality”, 22.

Eastern prayer methods and incorporate the insights of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen while doing the Ignatian *Exercises* because we encounter more commonalities than differences between Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and the Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen. Hence interfaith dialogue between various different religions is highly relevant and the practice and Easter prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen would definitely enrich the prayer experience during the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises*.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

The desire for God is engraved in the heart of all human beings because man and woman, doesn't matter whether s/he lived in the “*stone age*” or existing in the “*digital age*” of our times or the religion s/he belongs to, is confronted with the following existential questions: “What is man? What is the meaning, the aim of our life? What is moral good, what is sin? Whence suffering and what purpose does it serve? Which is the road to true happiness? What are death, judgment and retribution after death? What, finally, is that ultimate inexpressible mystery which encompasses our existence: whence do we come, and where are we going?”(NA 1). These questions make us to be in touch with the innate quest or desire for God fundamentally through the means of prayer and prayer methods which are found in all religious traditions. Prayer occupies a significant place in the Christian spiritual tradition since its inception till date. During his earthly life and ministry, Jesus Christ, first and foremost, was a praying person (Lk 5, 16; 6, 12) and like John the Baptist, he too taught their disciples to pray (Lk 11, 1). Before his crucifixion, Jesus, in the garden of Gethsemane, pleaded his disciples to pray (Mt 26, 41). After Jesus` ascension, his beloved mother Mary and the disciples were found together praying (Acts 1, 12-14). St Paul exhorted all Christians to “pray ceaselessly” (1Thes 5, 17). When Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio was named on 13<sup>th</sup> of March, 2013 as 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, his humble request to the Christian faithful was this: “Please pray for me” and he continues to do so wherever and whenever he meets the people be it Christians or otherwise. Hence, prayer is the source of Christian life and mission.

The Society of Jesus exists as a pathway to God. The Formula of the Institute of the Society of Jesus confirmed by Pope Julius III on 21 July 1550 states categorically that the Society of Jesus was founded chiefly to engage in the defense and propagation of faith, and the promotion of Christian life and principles through public sermons and lectures, as well as any other ministry of the word of God and the *Spiritual Exercises*, the catechetical instruction of children and uneducated adults, and assistance of the faithful by hearing confessions and

celebrating sacraments. Since its inception till date, the Society of Jesus has remained to the large extent loyal to the service of faith and promotion of justice all over the world. The guiding force of the Jesuits is undoubtedly the *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius of Loyola. It is in and through the *Spiritual Exercises*, the foundation of Ignatian Spirituality, the Jesuits have assisted scores of people to encounter God in all things and all things in God. Living out the Ignatian spirituality today signifies that a person always chooses to praise, reverence and serve God by imbibing the spirit of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius because all the characteristic themes of Ignatian spirituality are grounded in the Ignatian *Exercises*. These include a sense of collaboration with God's salvific action in the world, spiritual discernment in decision making, generosity of response to God's loving call, fraternity and companionship in service, and a great disposition to find God's will at all times.

As we have pointed out in the first chapter, Ignatian *Exercises* contain a well ordered sequence of practical guidelines that can be utilized to achieve two-fold aim of getting rid of the disordered affections and attachments and then by seeking and finding the will of God attain union with God and His creation. Like Ignatian *Exercises*, the Eastern spiritual traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism, as we have studied in the second chapter, too have developed and promoted various methods for ordering one's life as well as to facilitate God experience (Nāma Japa and Yoga) and enlightenment (Zen).

The contemporary world is rapidly shrinking due to the unprecedented advancement of science and technology. We find toady that there is a constant interaction, meeting and exchanging values between east and west at all levels of human existence be it politics, economics, culture or spirituality. Dialogue with the people of other faiths definitely results in intercultural-interreligious transformation on an individual, social and global scale as every human person has a deep longing or quest to have a "deepest dialogue" with God, the ultimate mystery of human life. Dialogue with people of other faiths is rooted in prayer, the deepest dialogue with God, the Ultimate Other.

Interfaith dialogue between various different religions is highly relevant today and the universal Church and the Society of Jesus consider it as the need of the hour as we live in a multi-religious context. As we have noted in the concluding chapter of this paper, over the years, some Christians, being deeply rooted in their own Christian tradition, have promoted

interfaith dialogue of religious experience particularly with Eastern prayer methods of Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen. A handful of Jesuits, without harbouring any kind of bias or prejudice, have made their sincere effort to engage in a meaningful dialogue between Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* and Eastern ways of praying namely Yoga, Nāma Japa and Zen.

By way of conclusion, we could affirm that the various forms of prayer and prayer methods found in all the major religious traditions are a means for spiritual nourishment. The building block for all types of prayer and prayer method is certainly the spiritual communication between the individual human being and God. Christian spirituality holds that the genuine prayer is a gift of God. The efficacy and fruitfulness of prayer is the work of the Spirit (Rom 8, 26-27). The prayer methods found in the *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius of Loyola (Christianity), Yoga, Nāma Japa (Hinduism) and Zen (Buddhism) are in fact just a means or help to achieve the greater goal of conquering self-love, self-will and self-interest and to obtain intimate union with God, the principle and foundation of every human person and the entire universe.

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## APPENDIX 1

### GUIDELINES FOR INTERRELIGIOUS UNDERSTANDING<sup>343</sup>

*The following guidelines have evolved from a set of eight “Proposed points of Common Understanding Among the Religions of the World,” drawn up by Father Thomas Keating in 1982. Since that time, the Points have been discussed and refined by a number of interreligious groups, including a sub-group of the First Assembly of World Religions which convened in McAfee, New Jersey in 1985 and the Snowmass Conference, which meets on a regular basis for the purpose of on-going contemplative dialogue.*

1. The world religions bear witness to the experience of the Ultimate Reality to which they give various names: Brahman, the Absolute, God, Allah, Great Spirit, the Transcendent.
2. The Ultimate Reality surpasses any name or concept that can be given to It.
3. The Ultimate Reality is the source (ground of being) of all existence.
4. Faith is opening, surrendering, and responding to the Ultimate Reality. This relationship precedes every belief system.
5. The potential for human wholeness - or in other frames of reference, liberation, self-transcendence, enlightenment, salvation, transforming union, moksha, nirvana, fana - is present in every human person.
6. The Ultimate Reality may be experienced not only through religious practices but also through nature, art, human relationships, and service to others.
7. The differences among belief systems should be presented as facts that distinguish them, not as points of superiority.

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<sup>343</sup> Walker, S (Ed.), *Speaking of Silence*, Paulist Press, New York 1987, 127-129.

8. In the light of the globalization of life and culture now in process, the personal and social ethical principles proposed by the world religions in the past need to be re-thought and re-expressed. For example:

- a. In view of the increasing danger of global destruction, the world religions should emphasize the corresponding moral obligation of nations and ethnic groups to make use of nonviolent methods for the resolution of conflicts.
- b. The world religions should encourage civil governments to respect every religion without patronizing one in particular.
- c. The world religious should work for the practical acceptance of the dignity of the human person; a more equitable distribution of material goods and of opportunities for human development; the cause of human rights, especially the right to choose and practice one's own religion or no religion; the solidarity and harmony of the human family; the stewardship of the earth and its resources; the renewal of their respective spiritual traditions; and interreligious understanding through dialogue.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **LITANY OF THE NAMES OF JESUS<sup>344</sup>**

**Culled from St Ignatius' writings**

Jesus, Son of the Virgin,	Have mercy on us.
Jesus, our Creator and Lord,	
Jesus, who created and redeemed us,	
Jesus, who are to be our eternal judge,	
Jesus, divine majesty,	
Jesus, complete and perfect goodness	
Jesus, infinite love,	
Jesus, our kindly and gracious Lord,	
Jesus, author and source of every blessing,	
Jesus, the giver of every gift,	
Jesus, our perfect and eternal good,	
Jesus, our salvation,	
Jesus, our help and support,	
Jesus, our Mediator,	
Jesus, the power of God,	
Jesus, our supreme leader and Lord,	
Jesus, our food and companion in pilgrimage,	
Jesus, beautiful and lovable,	
Jesus, poor and humble,	
Jesus, made obedient for our sake,	
Jesus, plunged in sorrow,	
Jesus, overwhelmed by anguish and grief,	

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<sup>344</sup> See Echániz, I., *Jesuits at prayer*, GSP, Anand 1996, 84.

Jesus, naked upon the cross,  
Jesus, who wished to be sold to redeem us,  
Jesus, who chose a painful death to give us eternal life  
Jesus, now in glory,  
Jesus, full of happiness and joy,  
Jesus, our consoler,  
Jesus, our peace,  
Jesus, our joy,  
Jesus, our hope,  
Jesus, our life,  
Jesus, our reward exceedingly great,  
Jesus, true life of the world,  
Jesus, our model and guide,  
Jesus, the head of your body and the Church,  
Jesus, the bridegroom of the Church your Spouse,  
Jesus, the head of our Society,  
Jesus, present in our superiors,  
Jesus, present in our brothers,  
Jesus, our rule,  
Jesus, with whom we have been placed by the Father,  
Jesus, in whom we have placed the anchor of our hope,  
Jesus, move our hearts to follow you in complete poverty,  
Jesus, make us conform to the will of the most Holy Trinity,  
Jesus, be the means of our union with the most Holy Trinity,  
Blessed be the name of Jesus, who provides in so many ways for this least Society. **Amen.**