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TWO WORLD VIEWS: THE ARCHAIC VIS-À-VIS THE HISTORICAL¹

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Any attempt at communication of the Christian Historical message to the Indian Archaic world² brings about several Christian-Hindu encounters. One can explore the give and take and the enrichment-correction dynamics of the Christian-Hindu encounter that takes place. We will prepare the background for such an encounter by explaining the following concepts:

- The two world views - West and East - and their cross-fertilization. The Christian-Hindu views are not isolated but rather are based of West-East world views. The myth of History and the myth of the Archaic.
- The mythical realm in the context of the human, ontological understanding.
- The mythical realm and the universe of meaning. There can be more than one 'universe of meaning', different approaches and viewpoints. We are focusing on two dominant viewpoints, viz., the Historical and the Archaic, on which are based the Christian and the Hindu world.
- Salient features of the two world-views of the Historical and the Archaic. More specifically, we should know what is meant by the Christian-Hindu view.

Leaving aside themes like the centuries old, traditional cultural divide between East and West,³ their increasing confluence, globalization, etc., we come straight to the two world views and the two Myths.

1.1.1 East and West

How would one meaningfully define entities such as the "East" and the "West"?⁴ Is it possible to systematically compare the basic differences and similarities between the two? It is

¹ Cf Nelson Falcao, *Kristapurāna: A Christian-Hindu Encounter – A Study of Inculturation in the Kristapurāna of Thomas Stephens, S.J. (1549-1619)* (Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2003), pp. 45-70. This whole article is practically taken from the above doctoral thesis of Dr. Falcao Nelson.

² Archaic comes from the word *arche*, which means the origin, the trans-historical which is eternally present. The Archaic world is that which concentrates on happening and change; it is trans-historical and beyond space-time. The myth of the Archaic deals with founding events which belong to 'time before all history', the time of ancient origins and figures.

³ Before exploring the Christian-Hindu Encounter it is indispensable to penetrate into the centuries old, traditional cultural divide between East and West. It has been a subject of discussion, debate, comment and controversy through the ages. It is a subject of scholarly research on which many volumes have been written. However, the East-West schism is not pre-dominantly historical or geographical. Nor is it philosophical. History and events affect broader spectrums of people – not pockets compartmentalized by different understandings of these categories.

The philosophical East has traditionally been wary and distrustful of the materialistic West, leading to a grand, notional Wall of Divide, with each clinging to their associated values, to keep their ethnicity and their identity alive. And so the task before us is clear. We have to construct two strong pillars 'East-West' or 'Archiac-History' on which the Christian-Hindu Temple of Encounter could be constructed. For such a Temple to stand, it is inevitable that it rests on strong 'East-West' Archaic-History' pillars.

⁴ The tableland of Iran geographically divides the Oriental from the Occidental; the East from the West. The east comprises India and the Far East; the West, Europe and the Levant. The Levant consists of the eastern part of

almost five centuries since Europe discovered Asia. And it seems that despite all the give and take, Europeans and Asians have learnt very little from each other since then.⁵ After centuries of contact between Japan, India, China and other Asian countries, Western industrialism and Capitalism preserved their traditional ways, verbal expressions, beliefs and ritual practices. The answer to the East-West question has to be sought in the cultural characteristics and traditional ways of the people and not in socio-economic factors alone.⁶

False antitheses and monolithic comparisons have persisted from one generation to the next; knowledge is difficult to attain, understanding is more so, and resort to cliché generalization proves irresistible. In recent times some of these clichés have been dressed up in new jargon, so that thousands of unwary readers have been led to believe that they were being given a new magic keys that would open the door to the “Oriental mind,” “Oriental logic” or what-not. But the keys opened doors into dream worlds inhabited only by clichés and phantasies.⁷

Thus, we still speak of Eastern and Western ways. In spite of the growing give-and-take, confrontation, meeting, symbiosis, mutual correction, globalization⁸ and exchange between East

Mediterranean with its islands and neighbouring countries. In fact, however, East and West are relative to one's perspective, since the earth is round. For long East and West have been separated and between the two there has been misunderstanding. The geographical differences are minimal. Even in a country one speaks of east and west. East and West are not Historical concepts. The History of the people over the world has increasingly ceased to be compartmentalized. From the earliest times, East and West have confronted each other and have mutually influenced and determined each other's destinies and policies.

The Western spirit is found in the East and Eastern ways are on the increase in the West. No cultural difference today is the monopoly only of the East or of the West. Even the philosophical differences cannot be compartmentalized as Eastern and Western. There is an increasing blend of East and West, with harmonious overtones; a curiosity to learn and imbibe; to explore and enrich. In this seeking, the two philosophies show points of confluence.

The same is true of religions too. Today we have world Religions that are not confined to a particular nation or continent, but are international, inter-continental and universal.

Therefore, East and West are not Historical, philosophical or religious entities but rather anthropological categories. In every human being, there is East and West. One has within oneself the East, i.e., the sun-rise, the unreachable horizon, self-transcendence, self-realization, self-fulfilment, a sense of hope; so also each one has within oneself the West, i.e. the reaching, the materialization, the concretization, the arrival, the sun-set. Consequently, for any inter-cultural, inter-religious and inter-human dialogue a personal conversion or a change of heart is indispensable. East and West have to first meet in the individual. As the globe becomes a village, isolation, individualism and ghettoism are inevitable eroded.

“It is clear that no people in the world today is isolated from those world-wide movements of thought and belief that everywhere tend to transform men's lives and the values they live by. Yet each people is engages, consciously and unconsciously, in selecting among the manifold influences which reach them and then o adapting and modifying those elements which they select. What governs this process and how does it come about that out of it cultures emerge which are amalgams – certain elements of them being native and distinctive, others clearly derived from one another world-wide movement?” [Hajime Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India-China-Tibet-Japan* (Hawaii: East-West Center Press), p.vi].

⁵ Cf Hajime Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India-China-Tibet-Japan* (Hawaii: East-West Center Press), p.v.

⁶ Hajime Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern People*, p.3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. v.

⁸ Paradoxically however, globalization and localization seem to go hand in hand. Even as the world is becoming more and more a village with cross-cultural, inter-cultural and intra-cultural exchanges, local cultures characterize a strong search for one's ethnicity and identity; a seeking for recognition and self-affirmation.

“Our sense of belonging to one world has never been keener than at present. Yet the emphasis today on this evident fact itself implies that while every individual is

and West, there still remains a certain gap, a gulf, a chasm, a split.⁹ There are particular and specific characteristics which are dominantly identified as Eastern and Western.

East and West are often dichotomized and labelled as “Oriental” and “Occidental”. The oriental is characterized as spiritual, introverted, synthetic and subjective, which the occidental as materialist, extroverted, analytic and objective. Such characterizing through opposites is too simplistic, since the Orient and the Occident are extremely diversified¹⁰ and complex within themselves.¹¹

In this study, among many differentiating characteristics, I would like to single out one comparative quality for both East and West, namely, Archaic for the East and Historical for the West; the myth of the Archaic vis-à-vis the myth of History. These two world views could be labelled as: i) the Archaic Hindu, and ii) the Historical Christian. I do not claim that these two world views are exclusively compartmentalized into Eastern and Western. No! far from that! There is a lot of confrontation, meeting, overlapping and a give-and-take among the two world views.¹² However, the purpose of the study here is to investigate, analyze and examine the two world views separately, in the hope of hastening an encounter between the two. In fact, one can feel and already experience the dawn of such a rendezvous looming large on the horizon.

The east stands for the Orient, the horizon, the domain of the Archaic. In the Eastern world, it is predominantly accepted by many scholars that being transcends thought, imagination and definition. It is not possible to qualify it. The various anthropomorphic predications about God, Man and the World, conceal or camouflage the Mystery which is transcendent and beyond human reason. This Mystery is the ultimate ground of everything and of all things.

The aim of Oriental mythology is not to validate or verify myths, divinities and rites as significant but rather to experience and identify oneself with the Being of beings which is both immanent and transcendent. There are several means such as prayer, *bhajans*, temples, gods, sages, image and cosmologies which take human beings to the shore of experience which is beyond the categories of thought. These means are later to be abandoned on arrival at the shore. The Kena Upaniṣad affirms: “To know is not to know, not to know is to know” (2.3). Further a Chinese Tao Te Ching states: “Those who know are still” (Tao Te Ching, 56).

The West is characterized by maturity and concreteness. Western man is steeped in his own consciousness. History is a myth of the West. The development of apprehension (anxiety, fear, comprehension) is necessary for mythical awareness. Unfortunately, in the West, apprehension has been neglected and has declined, degenerated and deteriorated during the course of the centuries, except in poets and artists.¹³

The Ultimate Being is personified as a Creator in Western mythological thought and imagery. Man is the creature created by the Creator out of nothing and the two are different. The aim of Occidental myth and ritual is to build a relationship between God and Man. Institutions and

affected by the quickening flow of world events, he is still strongly influenced by the ways of living and thinking in his own nation and culture.” (H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples*, p.3).

⁹ We have the current example of Germany. Even though the wall dividing East and West Germany has fallen in 1989, till today we still witness the gap and the diversity between the East and the West. A real unity has not as yet come about.

¹⁰ West is not without its multiplicity of traditions which have contributed to western civilization. The East is obviously even more pluralistic.

¹¹ H. Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern People*, p.3.

¹² R. Panikkar, “The Supreme Experience: The Ways of East and West”, *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics* (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 1983), p. 309-310.

¹³ R. Panikkar, “Education Religieuse dans une Perspective Interreligieuse”, *Monchanin* 8 (June-December 1975) 67-68.

rules are aids in enhancing such a relationship. The rules are believed to be supernaturally revealed and are executed and governed by the clergy, in the spirit of the myth of each institution and society.

1.1.2 Aim: Cross-Cultural Dialogue

This study is an attempt at a cross-cultural dialogue between the two world views. It is an encounter between two major ways of experiencing the 'way we are in this world', i.e., the Historical and the Archaic. There is a great difference between the two when it comes to the understanding of the real. The aim is not to seek justification nor to have a debate as to which of the two is right; rather it is to go deeper into the meaning of the Historical and the Archaic and further into their universes of meaning. We need to discern whether the two world views are exclusively compartmentalized into East and West; or whether the two are complementary, overlapping, mutually correcting and enriching each other.

1.2 PROCESS OF UNDERSTANDING THE REAL

Before we proceed, it would be important to see what we mean by understanding. In all our understanding there is a common space between a speaker and a listener during a dialogue. The common ground forms the basis of understanding, not understanding or misunderstanding.¹⁴

1.2.1 Presuppositions

There are three common factors that make every discourse possible: i) the common visible world; ii) the other person; iii) the common ground of understanding. The Christians and the Hindus stand in the same world, with the same people and share a common universe of understanding, even though each of the groups has its own separate 'universe of meaning', through which it interprets differently the common world, and its people. From such a particular universe of meaning the real and unreal are understood and interpreted. The understanding of truth and falsity depends on one's particular universe of meaning. No one can experience the physical world in its pure form. One experiences the physical world from within a specific universe of meaning. Thus, different approaches and viewpoints emerge. We are focusing on two such world-views, namely, the Hindu or Archaic and the Christian or Historical.¹⁵

1.2.2 Understanding

Understanding takes place at the level of being. The 'universe of meaning' is primarily ontological in character and not epistemological. Our being consists of understanding and our understanding is of being we understand at the level of being and we exist at the level of understanding. Our knowing-activity does not make the world its object; the world is rather the space in which our being understands. Our being is not a knowing-subject that studies the world as an object; our being floods the world like a light.¹⁶

¹⁴ Francis X. D'Sa, "The Reality of the Archaic and the Historical: Tentative Reflections on the Myth of the Archaic and the Myth of History," Unpublished article by the Professor (Presented at IRFWP Congress on the *Founders and Shaper of the World's Religions, Committee Six: The Significance of Historical Founders as Contrasted with Ancient Origins and Figures*, Washington, D.C., Nov. 25-30 1997, pp. 1-2. [This paper was also presented at the Conference organized by the Institute for the Study of Religion, Pune and Theologie Interkulturell, University of Frankfurt, Germany, on The Role of Time and History in Religion, Ishwani Kendra, Pune, August 5-9, 1999, pp. 1-14. All our future references to this Paper will be according to the Washington version].

¹⁵ Francis X. D'Sa, "The Reality of the Archaic and the Historical: Tentative Reflections on the Myth of the Archaic and the Myth of History," pp.1-4.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.1-4

1.2.2.1 Understanding Ontological

According to Martin Heidegger, understanding is not a way of knowing but a mode of being (*I-am-aware-of-being-in-the-world*). There is no subject-object dichotomy. Understanding is not psychological and epistemological, i.e., it is less on the level of the psychological process of knowledge, but more on the ontological level. This is an ontological understanding of understanding; it is an ontological understanding of truth as the disclosure of being and its priority over logical truth; it is the discovery of the anticipatory structure of understanding.¹⁷

1.2.3 The Mythical Realm and the Universe of Meaning

1.2.3.1 The Universe of Meaning

There are as many universes of meaning as individuals, groups, nations, cultures, institutions, societies, congregations and others.¹⁸ We are concerned here with two of these meanings, namely, the Archaic and the Historical. The universe of meaning is a background which is always presupposed in one's consciousness. It can be compared to a prism through which we grasp whatever we can. Whatever makes sense is due to this background. It is against this background that questions are understood and become meaningful, everything makes sense and becomes significant. But this background itself can never be fully objectified, questioned. Thus, truth in the Archaic universe of meaning is that which makes sense, and is significant. That which does not make sense and is insignificant is false. The Archaic universe of meaning determines the understanding of the real, which in turn determines the understanding of truth. Similarly, this could be applied to the Historical universe of meaning.

By meaning we refer to the meaning of a situation. Universe of meaning is the deepest level where certain values make sense and others do not. From this deepest level, the Historical and the Archaic perspectives take their respective direction of meaning. Universe of meaning is not a dictionary, not a lexicon nor an encyclopedia. It belongs to the realm of the mythical. It is an objectified aspect of the mythical realm to a certain extent. In the context of the two world views, our understanding of the myth of the Archaic, comes from its universe of meaning that looks at truth, as something that never changes. So also for the myth of History, its universe of meaning looks at truth, as something that has really happened.

1.2.3.2 Mythical Realm

By 'mythical' is meant, all that we take for granted in our knowing and on which our behaviour and values are based. The mythical realm is that through we understand but not that which we understand. It determines not only what we understand but also how we understand. It forms and shapes a universe of meaning. As regards the two world views, the real and the true are understood only from within the myth (mythos) of the Archaic and the myth of the Historical, and not independently of the myth. What is outside the mythical realm is not intelligible to us, it is a dynamic realm, constantly changing, producing change and being changed in the process. It can never be objectified. We can know of it only indirectly from its effects.¹⁹

Our spontaneous behaviour is guided not only by what is outside but also by our beliefs about the outside. Fact and interpretation, both go together to make an event. To see is to interpret; to experience is to interpret.

¹⁷ Francis X. D'Sa, "Introduction to Hermeneutics," Unpublished Notes of the Professor (Pune: Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth, 1990/Revised 1994), p.42.

¹⁸ The universe of meaning is called differently by different authors: thus we have, the anticipatory structure of understanding (Heidegger), the horizon of understanding (Gadamer), the mythos (Panikkar) and the pre-understanding (Ricoeur).

¹⁹ R. Panikkar, "Introduction", *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 4-5.

Mythos is the total view or horizon of our understanding; the nature of our beliefs depends on mythos. Mythos is not something static. All knowing is subjective. Subjectivity is reality conscious of itself; it is a way in which an individual or a whole group of people who share in a community of common beliefs experience reality.²⁰ Thus, each of the myths of the Archaic and of History has its own mythos, its own horizon of understanding.

1.2.3.3 Myths

1.2.3.3.1 Definition

From the beginning of History till the present day, we come across many different definitions and meanings of myths.²¹ Till recently most of the definitions have been more or less epistemologico-objective,²² i.e., they have presented myths as traditional narratives, stories about gods, accounts of origins through which religious assertions, pronouncements, affirmations, events, beliefs are depicted or re-presented. In short, myths are ‘that which we understand,’ ‘the object/objective’. However, as the contemporary trend is ontologico-subjective, according to which, myths are those ‘through which we understand and not that which we understand.’

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

²¹ In the oldest Greek texts the word *μύθος*, was used to mean narrative, story or the traditional stories about the gods. The Greek term *μύθος*, means ‘word’; it is derived from the Indo-European root *meudh* or *mudh*, which means, to reflect, to think over, to consider. Sophists gave a somewhat pejorative connotation to *μύθος*, because they did not believe in the stories of the gods. Xenophanes radically criticized the mythologies narrated by Homer, and Hesiod. Theagenes of Thegion gave an allegorical interpretation of myths; Euhemerus, a Sicilian author of the 4th century B.C., interpreted them pseudo-historically and his interpretation of the myths is called after his name as ‘euhemerism’, which means, explanation of myths on Historical basis. Plato used myths to convey a mystery but defined them as legends or fairy tales. For Aristotle myths were products of fancy and fabulation. Most of these authors knew of myths through literature and elements of causation (etiological elements).

According to the Hellenistic conception, *μύθολογεῖν*, means to lie or to tell tall stories. The Judeo-Christian understanding is close to the Hellenistic one. The Judeo-Christian tradition considers myths as discredited fictional narratives, absurdities, falsehoods, abominations and diabolical inventions.

²² The renaissance period (14th to 16th century A.D.) which revived art and letters under the influence of classical models. There was also a revitalization of interest in myths. According to Natalis Comes, myths were symbolical or allegorical expressions of philosophical speculation. During rationalism, Vico understood myths as spontaneous reactions of primitive human beings to natural phenomena and also as historical events in poetry. His conception of myths combined allegorical explanation and historical reductionism.

The religious connotation factor in myths was underscored during the Romantic movement. According to J.G. Herder and Schelling, myths were a necessary stage in the self-revelation of the Absolute. Around 1850 a new science of systematic and comparative study of religions was established, which had obvious interest in myths; but it still kept to the biases of the Enlightened period (18th century A.D.) regarding myths. Max Müller (1823-1900) presented myths as a disease of language. For Frazer, myths were mistaken explanations of human or natural phenomena. According to rationalism, all that did not agree with its idea of reality was considered myth. W. Wundt (1832-1920) defined myths as products of the imagination, while L. Lévy-Bruhl (1857-1939) considered them a prelogic, a primitive mentality. Cassirer, rejecting the allegorical interpretation, accepted myths symbolic form and as an interpretation of reality, a primitive intuition of the cosmic solidarity of life. Freud, Jung and their psychoanalytical schools, showed the striking similarities between the content of myths and the universe of the unconscious. In this way they gave a new turn to the study of myths. Reducing myths totally to the dynamics of the unconscious was their mistake.

A new and positive understanding of myths came about due to the study of anthropology, ethnology, phenomenology, history of religions, sociology, psychology, philosophy and folklore. Karl Jaspers (1883-) and Paul Ricoeur (1913-) positively defined myths as expressions or as ciphers of the transcendent, a language of being. In the primitive religions, myths exist as living and functional religious values. On the one hand, myths belong to the world of the imagination, while on the other hand, myths are the language of religion par excellence. J. Baumann (1837-1916, A.E. Jensen (1899-1965) and M. Eliade (1908-) have researched and presented a variety of forms and types of myths. According to them, myths are sacred stories of primordial events, which constitute and inaugurate a reality and determine the existential situation of man in the cosmos as a sacred world. Myths deal with the mysterious moments of human existence, namely, birth, death, initiation. Myths refer such moments to a divine archetype which happened in mythical time or mythical no-time and thus give them a sacred meaning.

According to Panikkar myths are the ensemble of contexts which are taken for granted. Thus, the myths of the Archaic and the Historical both have their ensemble of contexts. Such contexts place one in reality. They provide one with a point of reference in the world; they make one unique; they are the foundation of language; they are that which is experienced and manifested through one's being, without one being aware of it. In inter-personal relationships one comprehends another's myths.²³

Various philosophical systems have their significance in the ground, i.e., the myths. Thus, the Indian philosophical systems have their significance in the myth of the Archaic and the Western philosophical systems have theirs in the myth of the History. The ground is polyvalent; therefore, myths are indispensable in the encounter of religions and cultures.²⁴ Myths are those which make the meaning meaningful without being meant in the meaning.

Myths are reference points which give orientations. While one lives one's myths, one does not see them; they are the accepted horizons within which one experiences truth; one remains immersed in one's own myths. One is not critically aware of one's myths; one speaks from one's own myths from one's unexamined presuppositions.

One's myths are invisible to oneself but may be visible to the other, especially in close inter-personal relationships, which disclose the myths. One's myths make one unique and specific. Living myths, because they do not need an intermediary, do not permit interpretation.²⁵ Myths are those which one does not question because they are seen as unquestionable; one takes them for granted. Mythical stories are forms in which the myths are expressed and illumined.²⁶

1.2.3.4 *Myth and Logos*

1.2.3.4.1 *Co-relation and Inseparability*

Myth and Logos are two forms of human awareness. They are tools which enable one to understand the universe. Both are necessary to reach the mystery of reality. They are two attempts of man to provide an integral expression of reality. They are irreducible functions of apprehending the real. The whole reality is a texture of myth and Logos. They are not the same; they are not of the same order; both have their place. The myth is not Logos nor is it subordinate to it. They can be distinguished but not separated. Myth is eliminated when reduced to the intellectual level. Myth is unseen and can be seen with hind sight only after it has passed by. It is also seen in the traces, evidences left by it in the Logos. Myth becomes mythology when approached with the instrument of the Logos; that spells the death of the myth. Under rational investigation, the myth seems to be false and immoral.²⁷ The agent/component of ontology is the Logos/reason; the domain of the myth is faith. The relationship between myth and Logos is placed in the realm of orthopraxis (right action). Just as a mythical interpretation of the Logos is wrong, so also a metaphysical interpretation of the myth is erroneous.²⁸

Myth and Logos are both found in time; they have a universal value referring to that which goes beyond them. Logos maintains a univocal sense; myth does not contain but rather indicates and so it can be transmythologized, remaining open to several possible interpretations.²⁹

²³ R. Panikkar, "Tolerance, Ideology and Myth," *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 191-192.

²⁴ R. Panikkar, "Śunaḥṣepa: A Myth of the Human Condition", *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 243-245.

²⁵ R. Panikkar, "Introduction", *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 4-5.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

²⁷ R. Panikkar, "Morale de Mythe et Mythe de la Morale: Mythologie et Logomythologie", *Demitizzazione e Morale, Archivio di Filosofia* (1965), 393-396.

²⁸ R. Panikkar, *Kultmysterium in Hinduismus und Christentum* (Freiburg: 1967), p. 189.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 189-200.

‘Mythological’ means the concrete awareness resulting from the entrance of the Logos into the myth. It changes some mythical content into a logical content. The myth is distorted.³⁰

Where there is myth there is also Logos; Myth-Logos are inseparable. There is not Logos without myth nor myth without Logos. While myth is dialogal, Logos is dialectical. Myth and Logos provide responses to many of the concrete problems faced by humanity. Pluralism belongs to the realm of myth and not to the Logos. A myth permits many and variant concretizations, whose relationship, may not be logical. Through such concretizations of a myth, plurality is born thus allowing a human co-existence in polarity and creative tension.³¹

1.2.3.4.2 Balance and Integration

Myth can be compared to a bright dazzling light. Such a light is invisible because one cannot look at it directly; rather one turns one’s back to it so as to see the things illuminated by it. Myth illuminates reality but is itself invisible and cannot be directly looked at. It is not the object of thought; it is not the object of discourse but the expression of a particular form of awareness. It is transparent. It is that which we take for granted, that which is not questioned by us. It is not the thought. It purifies thought, by-passes thought, so that the unthought may emerge and the intermediary disappear. Myth does not think, and thus it liberates us from thinking. It leads human beings into the realm of freedom of choice and even more – into the freedom of being. To be in the domain of the myth implies no thinking, no thought and no knowing of what is being thought in the thinking. This does not necessarily imply that we should neglect or undermine the legitimate importance of thought, the Logos. It only points to the fact that the Logos cannot monopolize man. Every human being is more than the Logos, thought or reflexive consciousness.

Unfortunately, the Western Christian world view has reduced man to Logos, thought and reflexive consciousness. In such a world view, the whole understanding is epistemological; it reduces the whole world to an object; it investigates and analyzes Being; it paves a way towards Being in a projective transcendence.

1.2.3.4.3 Ideology

The demythicized part of the view of the world is called ideology. It is born from personal reflection and the movement from mythos to Logos; it is the critical awareness, rational world-view in a particular place and time; it is limited to time/temporality, space and history. It is a doctrinal framework which flows from the conscious part of oneself. Unlike myth, one can recognize one’s own ideology and those of others. Thus, the myths of the Archaic and of the Historical cannot be recognized but the Eastern and Western ideologies can be recognized.

Ideology is an intrinsically temporal system of idea governing social life. It is the passage from myth to Logos. Through personal reflection, one builds up a somewhat congruous set of ideas, a doctrinal system which permits one to place oneself rationally and ideologically in the world, in space and time. Ideology consists of a spatio-temporal system of the Logos; it functions in a concrete Historical moment. In the place where it is situated, it is a system of ideas formulated by the Logos; it cannot transcend its temporality.³²

Myth has its own specific role in the attainment of reality. Myth has its own truth. Myth empowers one to search for the foundation of everything. Myth withdraws to a deeper level when confronted by the Logos.³³ In fact, demythologization implies a remythologization, i.e., a change of myth.³⁴

³⁰ R. Panikkar, “The Law of Karman and the Historical Dimension of Man”, *Philosophy East and West*, 22 (1972), 33.

³¹ R. Panikkar, “Education Religieuse dans une Perspective Interreligieuse”, *Monchanin*, 8 (June-December 1975) 68.

³² R. Panikkar, “Tolerance, Ideology and Myth,” *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 30-32.

³³ R. Panikkar, “The Supreme Experience: The Ways of East and West”, *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 297.

³⁴ R. Panikkar, “Tolerance, Ideology and Myth,” *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 30-32.

1.2.3.4.4 Integration

Besides Logos awareness there is also mythical awareness. Hence, human awareness should not be reduced only to the realm of the Logos alone; but should also be integrated with mythical awareness. A constant interaction between Logos and myth leading to a new mythical awareness emerges strongly in theological reflection. Theology is a conscious passage from myth to Logos. Along with the demands of the Logos, the realities of the myth and the freedom of the Spirit should also be well integrated. This integration between myth and Logos, is the task of philosophy and theology.³⁵ Thus, Indian philosophy and theology have to bring about the integration between myth of the Archaic and the Logos; so also Western philosophy and theology have to bring about the integration between the myth of the History and the Logos.

1.2.3.5 Myth, Faith and Belief

1.2.3.5.1 Faith and Belief

Beliefs are like windows to a world-view. They are not pictures of the outside world. They do not do justice to the demands of the outside world and so they get corrected complemented and adjusted. Operative beliefs shape the perspective of every person and every group. Consequently, one group produces a perspective different from another, according to its beliefs and horizon of understanding. For example, in general we could say, Germans are workaholics, French are revolutionaries and Indians are tolerant people.

Human consciousness passes from mythos to Logos through the instrumentality of belief. The myth in which one believes is articulated through belief. However, to believe in a belief does not imply making it an object of knowledge. Human reflection on the contents of belief could either be a useless, thinking reflection – since the content is not understood – or a destruction of belief by converting belief into knowledge. We know that we believe in something but we do not know what we believe in. Faith expressing itself in belief has no object. For example, the expression of the act of believing could be a cognitive statement, ‘I believe in God’. The expression becomes a real belief when I do not know God as the object of my belief. Thus, the God of belief is a symbol and not a concept, a formulation or an object. The believed is not the known. Thus, knowledge and belief are different forms of consciousness.³⁶

1.2.3.5.2 Symbol and Reality

The passage from mythos to Logos is the expression of belief; it is not a concept by a symbol. This expression is the Truth of Being. Revelation is the disclosing of the vessel. The symbol constitutively joins the two poles of the real, the object and the subject. A symbol which requires interpretation ceases to be a living symbol and becomes a mere sign. Signs help in interpreting symbols.

1.2.3.5.3 Hermeneutics

The hermeneutic of a myth³⁷ is its Logos and is no longer the myth. Myth is the horizon against which any hermeneutic is possible. Man cannot manage just with symbols alone, he requires

³⁵ R. Panikkar, *Worship and Secular Man* (London: 1973), p.93.

³⁶ R. Panikkar, “Tolerance, Ideology and Myth,” *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 30-34.

³⁷ In the Heideggerian sense, hermeneutics is not general but fundamental because understanding is not psychological and epistemological but ontological, from the point of view of being.

Ontological hermeneutics implies that reality is not taken as ‘a collection of objects’ but rather ‘all-that-exists’. It means experiencing and seeing a unitary vision of reality as full openness and not as subject-object dichotomy. It is not objectifying the reality but rather seeing the inter-relationship between all things that exist. It does not accept subject-object epistemology or metaphysics but ontology. It does not imply speaking of things ontically, of their entityness, of ‘what’ a thing is but rather ontologically, of their being, of the mystery of being present, of ‘is’.

hermeneutics also. Hermeneutics is the art and science of interpretation which brings forth significance, conveys meaning, restores symbols to life and finally lets new symbols emerge. It is a method through which the distance between a knowing subject and an object to be known is overcome. It overcomes the epistemological distance and as a consequence, the human alienation.

Through hermeneutics of the myth of the Archaic we have the Eastern world view and through the hermeneutics of the myth of the Historical we have the Western world view.³⁸

1.2.3.5.3.1 Morphological Hermeneutics

Morphological hermeneutics is the reading of the text; it is the unfolding of implicit or unknown elements. It proceeds according to the rules of correct thinking. Thus, the text of the myths of the Archaic and of the Historical are read in order to get the morphological hermeneutics.³⁹

1.2.3.5.3.2 Diachronical Hermeneutics

Diachronical hermeneutics implies the knowledge of the context, of ideology and time in order to understand the text. The gap between the reader/understander and the read/to-be-understood, dims or changes the meaning of the given. Such a gap is reduced by diachronical hermeneutics; its method is Historical. It implies entering another world view, a movement from present to the past; it is learning from the past.

Thus, in order to understand the text of the myths of the Archaic and of the History, the knowledge of the context and of time is required.

1.2.3.5.3.3 Diatopical Hermeneutics

Diatopical hermeneutics reduces the gap between cultures. It is cross-cultural hermeneutics. Every culture has a radically different approach to reality. Both cultures offer an equally original source of understanding and so such a hermeneutics is not objectifiable. The method is dialogical dialogue and not scientific. The self-understanding, self-interpretation of every human being is part of one's being-in-the-world and so cannot be limited to what one thinks of oneself alone. Even

Ontological hermeneutics takes a human being as one who is always 'aware of his being in-the-world' and as one who searches for being. A human being is not just a knower or a subject but a 'clearance' where the light of being lights up both his own being and that of his world; it means 'being there', i.e., 'Dasein', that is, one who carries this world wherever he goes; thus, he is the 'there', i.e., *das 'Dà'*; he is the lighting of Being. He is the Being of the *Da*. Besides, his 'being there' is understanding; his ek-sistence being and understanding are identical, i.e., being is understanding and understanding is being and therefore, understanding is ontological. Also, we say, we are our knowing and not we have our knowing. Knowing is being and being is knowing, not metaphysically but phenomenologically.

According to ontological hermeneutics, being-in-the-world is constitutive of being human or Historical; Reality is cosmotheandric, a triple community, having three irreducible centres.

Knowing is ontological; knowing means (under-) standing in the dis-closure of reality; not objectification of truth, i.e., truth is not dependent on the knowing subject. This dis-closure of reality is the ontological truth. Human beings have an anticipatory structure of knowing, i.e., our being-in-the-world implies a world of familiarity in which we are used to 'having-in-advance' and 'grasping-in-advance'. All understanding is ontological; it is partial, never exhaustive; understanding is 'understanding as'; Understanding means responding to the issue that the pre-understanding raises. The act of understanding is determined not so much by our judgments as by our pre-judgments. Every act of understanding shapes tradition and is itself shaped by tradition.

The mythic level most common to all human beings in the level of being-in-the-world; where, irrespective of culture, creed or period of History, we have a common world of birth, suffering and happiness. Language is the realm of meaning. Cf Francis X. D'Sa, "Introduction to Hermeneutics", pp. 1-39. Cf also R. Panikkar, "Introduction," *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 8-11.

³⁸ R. Panikkar, "Introduction", *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*, pp. 8-11.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-11.

one's interpretation of the world, belongs to what the world is. Therefore, the human search is never-ending and infinite.⁴⁰

Such diatopical hermeneutics reduces the gap between the two world views, the Eastern and the Western. Each one of these world views has a different approach to reality.

1.2.3.6 Myth of History

History is a point of reference for the indisputability of facts on which the critique of other myths is based. There are no pure facts; facts exist always within the context of a myth. Thus, the point of reference, the touchstone, the criterion of truth is the myth; myth is the basis and foundation of belief.

Historical facts comprise of simple evidence for those who live the myth of History; and for those outside the myth of History, they are events which do not have their full, genuine reality. There is the myth of History in the Judaeo-Christian tradition; but there are also other myths. These myths have to put on a historical garb so as to be intelligible in the mythical world of History. In the myth of sacred History, the truth lies in the historical character of sacred History, and mystery lies in the sacred character. Because of this sacrality a particular historical fact becomes the model, the ideal and the pattern.

1.2.3.3.1 Ultimate and Immediate

Myth is like the sun whereas History is like the objects that the sun falls on. Like the sun, myth cannot be looked at, but it illumines many articles; it shows and brightens all. The observer must look for the objects/articles and explore, to find more than what the naked eye can see or ears can hear. One has to go beyond five senses and experience through the awareness of the heart and inspiration of the spirit. History instead tempts one with immediate objects, the facts of life, that which functions, works and is pleasing to the five senses. These objects or historical facts attract attention and their immediacy hypnotizes an onlooker. It satisfies the intellectual thirst and one gets lost in the attractive world of historical objects, articles and facts, so much so that one fails to look around and see the rest of reality which is so vast and rich. One forgets that the whole of reality around is lit and illumined by the sun. History is lit up and made visible by myth. Myth is the ultimate illuminating background against which all historical facts and events make sense and have their meaning. Myth is the illuminated background, presupposed in the conscious life of History.⁴¹

1.2.3.6.2 Narratives

Apparently the myth of History and the myth of the Archaic seem to be complete opposites. But they are not. Both are narratives, i.e., arrangements of events into unified stories. The myth of the Archaic is a narrative of origins, taking place in a primordial time beyond everyday reality. The myth of History is a narrative of events both recent and further in the past but situated in human time or the time of everyday reality.

The myth of the Archaic is thus foundational; it narrates founding events.⁴² When a founding event has no place in History because it is situated in a time before all History, only then

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-11.

⁴¹ Francis X. D'Sa, "The Reality of the Archaic and the Historical: Tentative Reflections on the Myth of the Archaic and the Myth of History," pp. 4-5.

⁴² The myth of Archaic model (or myth of ancient origins and figures) has come down from the stories of the gods in ancient Greece. The Greek myths of Archaic gradually begin to include the history of heroes and ancestors; thus there is a transition from the myth of Archaic to the myth of History in the Greek myths. According to contemporary anthropology, the notion of the myth of Archaic has been extended to mean types of narratives; and these narratives are widespread in all contemporary Archaic societies. These narratives are anonymous, without any proper origin, received

does the myth of the Archaic exist. This ‘time before all History’ is called ‘*in illo tempore*’ by Mircea Eliade. The myth of the Archaic is not the founding events but rather the relation between our time and the time of the myth of ancient origins and figures.⁴³

1.2.3.6.3 *Relation to Myth of the Archaic*

Relation to myth of the Archaic to the myth of History⁴⁴ can be considered at three levels:

1.2.3.6.3.1 *Meaning Class of Literati Gives to History*

Besides being a literary product, the myth of History is also what men do or suffer; it is the narrative of the events of the past. Besides narration, there are other issues that the myth of History examines: interpretation by a given culture and its historical mode of existence; the stability or change affecting the mores or institutions of a culture and the meaning of change. Does change have any end or is it meaningless? Does the change lead to progress or to regression?⁴⁵

1.2.3.6.3.2 *Meaning Society Gives to History*

History is a literary activity through which a society accounts for its own past. There is a relationship between History as literary activity and History as lived experience; and this affects the relationship between the myth of History and the myth of the Archaic. Myth as a foundation gives a positive or negative value to History. History is a mode of human existence. A society may have two types of myths, namely, myths of decadence and myths of progress. Historiography provides with partial answers whereas the broader questions are answered through myths. Two societies may have different fundamental myths but similar Historical goals.⁴⁶

1.2.3.6.4 *Truth of Myth and Historical Veracity*

The myth of the Archaic relates events which have happened before History began, trans-historical, in an eternal instant. Hence, by its very nature, the myth of the Archaic repels historicity. The myth of the Archaic is not an unintentionally distorted, misrepresented or selected History. It tells about real things that happened, not in recorded time or Historical time but before time began, in the era of the gods. The myth of the Archaic tells the story of primordial events which narrate the manner in which reality entered time and thus came into existence. The myth of the Archaic manifests the true nature and structure of the present realities by associating them to a meta-empirical reality. It illustrates and exhibits the deeper and real meaning of life by demonstrating how a particular being in the world came into existence or how it began to exist in time and space. The myth of the Archaic reveals more than it explains. It is not concerned about apparent contradictions. The contradictions if any, are only in the empirical realm and not in the meta-

through tradition and accepted as credible, with no guarantee of authenticity. After many stages of evolution, the myths of History put a stop to this mode of transmission, especially in the West.

Myth of Archaic as concerned with narrative or origins, goes beyond the myth of History of gods, heroes and ancestors. The questions of the origins embrace many issues regarding individual and social life, namely: i) origins of a particular society; ii) causes of the existence of an event or a rite; iii) justification of a particular authority; iv) causes of suffering, misery and death. The myth of Archaic deals with the creation of the world and man. It is concerned with the present physical, moral and social condition. Thus, the myth of Archaic deals with a basic explanation and maintains a complex relationship with myth of History.

⁴³ Paul Ricoeur, “Myth and History”, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 10 (1987), 273.

⁴⁴ The myth of Archaic and the myth of History are two different kinds of narratives. Myth of Archaic is a narrative about the origins. The myth of History is a literary genre, namely the writing of History or historiography. The myth of History has originated from the myth of Archaic; this is a genetic relation between the myth of History and the myth of Archaic. The place of the myth of Archaic is not necessarily taken by the myth of History; rather both co-exist.

⁴⁵ Paul Ricoeur, “Myth and History”, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 10 (1987), 273-274.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 274.

empirical realm. But the myth of the Archaic is not any remarkable learning or scientific exposition but rather a consciousness of a reality. It demonstrates whatever is true and valid according to the religious consciousness of the believer.

The myth of the Archaic is considered holy because its principal performers are gods or superhuman beings whose intervention in the cosmos is for the sake of establishing an order. The recitation of a myth of the Archaic, especially during cult ceremonies, makes the presence of the supernatural a reality. The priests or elders who are experts in the myth of the Archaic, initiate others at a proper age into the sacred traditions of a religion, sect or a tribe.

1.3 DIFFERENT VIEWS: ARCHAIC (HINDU) AND HISTORICAL (CHRISTIAN)

The world can be compared to a mountain. Just as there are different angles from which the same mountain can be viewed, so also there exist different world-views. The same world can be experienced differently from different view-points all views are valid, real and complementary, yet each view is specific, unique and different. Unfortunately, the world view of History has dominated all other views considering itself to be the real objective view and the only one that really works. The rest of the views are considered mythological.⁴⁷

1.3.1 The Historical World View

1.3.1.1 History

History belongs to a world of reality, a real world. It is concerned not just with knowing historical facts that exist objectively and independently of the interpretation of the historian but is a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts. It is an unending dialogue between the present and the past.

The facts of history are not absolute, but are refracted through the mind of the recorder. It is indispensable for a historian to make contact with the mind of those about whom history is written. He is bound by the conditions of his own age; and has to choose his words/language. His choice of words does not permit neutrality.

The dual function of a historian is to understand the History of the past and to increase one's mastery over the present. There is no History without interpretation. History does not consist of pure facts but of selected recordings. The basic facts are already an interpretation because they are filtered through the world-view.

Historical consciousness has its roots at the mythical level. There is no dichotomy between myth and History. The perspective of History is grounded in the myth. Thus, the historical is also mythical.

1.3.1.2 Salient Features

According to the Christian or historical world view, change is synonymous with events; it is recorded as a history of events. Change is events concretized in history. This historical world-view concentrates on events; thus it focuses on the part (events, man) and not on the whole (cosmos). It stresses the partial aspect of a larger process. History is real and reality is to be found only in history, reality which has taken place. History discovers causes of change in man and environment. History provides the 'glasses' through which one sees the real, the bridge that connects to the real, the criterion of the real. Every event is true and real. History is made up not so much of individual happenings as of patterns of events. If we are in the world of change, we are real. The house of History is built with the bricks of facts.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Francis X. D'Sa, "The Reality of the Archaic and the Historical: Tentative Reflections on the Myth of the Archaic and the Myth of History," pp. 6-7.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-9.

This Historical world-view looks for a pragmatic reality. That which is not connected with events and with what really happened, is considered illusory or unreal. That which corresponds or is coherent with what happened, is considered to be true. The dialogue between change and man implies events. It has to do with that which has been made, that which has become, or has come to be.

The historical world-view searches for truth in historical happenings. History is a conscious dialogue between the past and the present. The foundation of historical interpretation is the search for direction; the movement of History is linear.⁴⁹ The stress on history and the historical is the foundation stone of the myth of history.

In this historical world-view, the real is identified within the basic framework of the world of space and time. It is suspicious of anything which does not stand on the foundation of space and time. The net of history catches the fist of the (significance of) events of space and time which escape the net of the Archaic. The Christian historical world view is not more real than the Hindu Archaic world view. Reality seen through the eyes of history is not more real than the reality seen through the eyes of the Archaic.⁵⁰

Historical time⁵¹ is made significant, so that history becomes salvation history; salvation is in time;⁵² History is the foundation of a salvation-History; History assumes that bondage is due to historical happenings and liberation is to be achieved through historical events. For example, Adam's action is considered an act of disobedience, whereas Jesus' death is held as an act of supreme obedience. Jesus' actions of incarnation, passion, death and resurrection have paradigmatic

⁴⁹ The cyclical and linear conceptions of time oppose one another and the question of their opposition is a thorny one. Myth of Archaic follows the cyclical time, whereas myth of History follows the linear time. The notion of cyclical time has pluri-meaning. Besides the periodical regeneration of time through particular rites, there are other ways of returning to same situations and events. That the notion of linear time is a global alternative to cyclical time is not certain. Contrary myths concerning the cyclical or linear character of time could exist in a particular culture or society. This presents uncertainty regarding Historical condition and the whole of humanity. A culture that produces myths of cyclical time or of linear time may also yield a History within the temporal confines, suiting both the versions of time. Cf. also Francis X. D'Sa, "The Reality of the Archaic and the Historical: Tentative Reflections on the Myth of the Archaic and the Myth of History," pp. 7-10.

⁵⁰ Francis X. D'Sa, "The Reality of the Archaic and the Historical: Tentative Reflections on the Myth of the Archaic and the Myth of History," pp. 7-9.

⁵¹ History unfolds in time and the society interprets the time. Myth of History is the narrative of human actions in the past. But the interest in the past is inseparable from an interest in the present and the future. Thus, a reference to time has to be included in the definition of myth of History; it deals with the knowledge of societies and people in time.

Myth of History takes place in the real time or Historical time. Temporality is the time of the myth of History. Temporality in an autonomic world. It is the specific form of human time. It is neither eternity nor indiscriminate time, i.e., a mere succession of different moments. Temporality is the particular way in which man exists, through events, looking back to the past to learn for the present and marching ahead into the future. It is a qualitative accumulation, incorporation of the past into the present and stretching towards the future. [Cf. R. Panikkar, *Worship and Secular Man*, pp. 38-39].

Time is neither *a priori* nor *a posteriori*. It is the crossing point between matter and consciousness. It cannot be objectified. Man as a temporal being is constantly unfulfilled with his temporal existence. He continually attempts to overcome his temporality. In man there exists a constant tension between being and becoming, one and the many, identity and difference, time and eternity. Time is a property inherent in any being but being is not exhausted by time. [R. Panikkar, "Times and Sacrifice: The Sacrifice of Time and the Ritual of Modernity," *The Study of Time III: Proceedings of the III International Conference of the International Society for the Study of Time*, eds. J.T. Fraser, N. Lawrence, D. Park (Berlin: 1978, 684-713).

⁵² In the mythical world of History, time is but the moving image of unmoving eternity; it is an unending repetition of creation through the means of recurring regeneration re-creation, renewal and restoration. According to Judeo-Christian tradition time is creation itself. Historical events are important since they mark God's intervention in time; the Historical events do not record periodical repetition of archetypes but rather unique and decisive moments, taken place once and for all never to be reversed. The Prophets underscored the Historical interventions of Yahweh in time-space-History of the people of Israel. They did not speak of God's presence in the cosmos. They had a strong sense of History and the decisive moments and events in the life of Israel.

character and are salvific events. They are efficient causes of salvation.⁵³ The incarnation effects salvation through acts arising from the power of his divine essence. The eternal event is the God of History acting in History; the temporal event is act and potency constituting being.⁵⁴

1.3.2 The Archaic World View

1.3.2.1 Salient Features

1.3.2.1.1 Happening, Change

The Hindu world view concentrates on happening; it is a cosmic perspective. The central category is the cosmos and the cosmos becomes the background; the stress is on wholeness, totality, fullness, completeness and comprehensiveness.

According to Archaic world view, change is considered a mere happening in the whole of the reality. No change is considered as an event. Change affects the whole and the whole is fully interconnected. When a part is affected, the whole is touched. There is no pattern of events. The large net of the cosmic world-view cannot catch the small fish of historical facts since they are of no interest on it.⁵⁵

1.3.2.1.2 Trans-Historical is Real

Reality, according to this Archaic world view, is not in history and history is not the bridge that connects to the real, nor is it the criterion of the real. The Archaic is as real or illusory as the historical world view. It looks for truth in the trans-historical realm. The historical is not neglected but its worth is seen in its relationship to the Imperishable Arche. That which is immutable is real and if we are in the world of the immutable, we are real. What changes cannot be real. The world that abides, in spite of change is significant. The criterion of truth is absolute immutability. Only the Absolute is real. The real is abidingly immanent. It does not look for pragmatic reality because that is not really real. The truths of daily life (e.g. it is raining, there is a road accident, etc.) are not to be taken as truth in the real and lasting sense of the word because they are immutable. If we are lost in the world of change, we are not real.

The Archaic world view holds that soteriology is built on ontology. There is no final fulfilment that makes sense; there is no goal to be reached, no aim to be achieved. The movement is spiral and not linear. Actions are not viewed as good, bad or neutral but the intention behind the actions is examined. The essence of liberation is the inner intention which binds or frees. This is a viewpoint which is holistic and integral and overcomes partiality. The symptoms of unreality and bondage are incompleteness, partiality, fragmentariness, dissipation and dispersion.⁵⁶

The Archaic world view does not consider this or that time but the wholeness of time.⁵⁷ Archaic comes from the word *arche* which means the origin, the beginning which has no beginning,

⁵³ In the annual liturgical year the birth, activity, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are repeated. This re-actualization, re-presentation takes place even through the celebration of the seven sacraments or special rituals. In spite of the fact of re-actualization *hic et nunc* of the events through the sacraments, the insistence on their being Historical events is not minimized. By remembering them as Historical events, their salvific effect achieved *once and for all* in time-space-History is underscored. The early Christian gave great importance to the historicity of the events: "For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eye-witnesses of his majesty...we heard...we were with him..." (2 Pt. 1:16-18).

⁵⁴ Francis X. D'Sa, "The Reality of the Archaic and the Historical: Tentative Reflections on the Myth of the Archaic and the Myth of History," pp. 7-9.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Each being reaches temp-iterity at the end of its time. In order to have a glimpse into the tempiternal one needs to transcend imagination and even thinking; tempiternity is more than mere non-temporality. [Cf R. Panikkar, *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism* (Bangalore: 1982), p. 161]. The spirit in a human being is killed by reducing man to a mere temporal being, and time to a linear succession. The uniqueness of an act is destroyed by the very consciousness of time; there are many human realities which are not datable. [Cf. R. Panikkar, "The European University Tradition

he eternal presence, the trans-historical which is eternally present.⁵⁸ It refuses to accept the world of space and time as the basic framework within which the real is identified. It points to the realm beyond space and time. The net of the Archaic catches the fish of (the significance of) space and time itself; the Archaic looks through space-time for the imperishable on which everything rests.⁵⁹

In the Archaic Indian world, Avatāra is not temporal but tempiternal Revelation; Avatāra is a paradigm of integration, wholeness, of concentration and completeness; Avatāra performs actions holistically, not for selfish reasons but for the welfare of all. It has the right intention; and acts selflessly and holistically. It is not an efficient cause of liberation but rather the final cause. The cause of bondage is the absolutization of a part by placing itself in the centre. Avatāra does not put itself in the centre.

1.4 CONCLUSION

Every world view is a product of experience and interpretation. There is no world-view which is a purely objective. Every world-view is a combination of both the subjective and the objective; it affects the whole being, namely, knowing, willing, action and passion. It is holistic, and has a thrust that manifests a historical consciousness or a cosmic perspective. The Historical and the Archaic are world views; each of them is a view and not a vision. Only the two together, like the two eyes of the Puruṣa, can produce a vision, depth-vision.

Joseph Campbell mythically describes the emerging encounter between the two world views:

Two completely opposed mythologies of the destiny and virtue of man, therefore, have come together in the modern world. And they are contributing in discord to whatever new society may be in the process of formation. For of the tree that grows in the garden where God walks in the cool of the day, the wise men westward of Iran have partaken of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, whereas those on the other side of that cultural divide, in India and the Far East, have relished only the fruit of eternal life. However, the two limbs, we are informed, come together in the center of the garden, where they form a single tree at the

and the Renascent World Cultures”, *Communio Viatorum*, (January-February 1968), 7]. In the human person there is an element which cannot be reduced to the temporal. [Cf. R. Panikkar, “The Mirage of the Future,” *The Teilhard Review* 8 (1973), p. 45]. Outside temporality, man has a certain perspective whereby he is aware of this very temporality. Some human experiences are not temporal. [Cf. R. Panikkar, *Worship and Secular Man*, pp. 41-46].

Novelty is not criterion of authenticity. If one sees time as circumference one would be liberated from this obsession of novelty. The past is not outdated. Seeing time as equidistant from a centre takes away the obsession of the future. True liberation implies realizing that the ultimate significance of life does not lie in time. Experiencing time as a closed circle takes away the obsession of the present. One need not have the totality of human experience in a purely temporal present. One may live the present in the temporal event or in its tempiternal reality. [Cf. R. Panikkar, “Le Temps Circulaire: Temporalisation et Temporalité”, *Temporalité et Aliénation, Archivio di Filosofia* (1975), 220-225]. Tempiternity is built into the very core of time and yet not to be confused with it. It is neither eternity nor post-temporal eternity; it is rather the very heart of time. It is that which overcomes time (here) and eternity (later). The entire reality is tempiternal, i.e., temporal and eternal simultaneously. Tempiternity is not something separable from time or contradictory to it but is in the midst of time.

Man is conscious of temporality but the act of consciousness is not temporal. An act of consciousness is inseparable from the object of awareness and is beyond space and time. [Cf. R. Panikkar, “Times and Sacrifice: The Sacrifice of Time and the Ritual of Modernity,” pp. 698-713].

⁵⁸ The time of the myth of Archaic is trans-historical time; it is not pre-historic time but primeval time. In reference to the eschatological myths; it is not the future but the last days, the end of time. Before all other time comes the primeval time. It is the time of origins; this primeval time can never become a past; it is continually a present.

Eternity is independent of time. It is neither infinite time, nor supra-temporal or infra-temporal. It cannot be compared to the temporal reality. It is the specific character of divinity. Certain trends in Western and Oriental thought have interpreted eternity as a dualistic conception of the universe; but it need not necessarily be so. [Cf. Panikkar, *Worship and Secular Man*, p. 30-34].

⁵⁹ Cf. Francis X. D’Sa, “The Reality of the Archaic and the Historical: Tentative Reflections on the Myth of the Archaic and the Myth of History,” pp. 6-9

base, branching out when they reach a certain height. Likewise, the two mythologies spring from one base in the Near East. And if man should taste of both fruits he would become, we have been told, as God himself (Genesis 3:22) – which is the boon that the meeting of East and West today is offering to us all.⁶⁰

In the final analysis, the two world views that we have examined, viz., the Archaic Hindu and the Historic Christian perspective, are simply two ways of experiencing our Being in the world. They are not antithetical; rather they are two faces of a single coin – two different ways of looking at a single reality. They represent two universes of meaning.

Today, while we await a new dawn, in which the encounter of these two worlds is gradually becoming inevitable, one is called to-be-aware of the presence of two world-views within oneself. The confrontation, meeting, rendezvous has to be first and foremost experienced within oneself. This points to a personal conversion; for which a change of heart is indispensable. East and West, the myth of the Archaic and the myth of History, Myth and Logos, have to meet within oneself; and only then can we hope for not just a dawn but a sunrise and flowering of the budding encounter. Globalization is a call to bid farewell to isolation, individualism, self-centredness, egoism and ghettoism, and to face the challenges of a paradigm shift to cross-culturation, cross-fertilization, mutual-correction and mutual-enrichment.

⁶⁰ Joseph Campbell, *Oriental Mythology: The Masks of God*, Vol. II (New York: 1976), p. 9.