

SPIRIT CHRISTOLOGY: AN INDIAN CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

CHRISTINA MANOHAR

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**FRANCIS CLOSE HALL
LEARNING CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE
Swindon Road, Cheltenham GL50 4AZ
Tel: 01242 714600**

Abstract

The theologians of the early church sought to interpret the Christian gospel in the categories of 'Mediterranean antiquity.' The classical two-nature model of Christology has a Greek philosophical underpinning that shapes the ontological construction of the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ. *Logos* Christology is primarily a reflection on the *hypostatic* union of the *Logos* with the human reality of Jesus that leaves little place for a consideration of Jesus' relation to the Holy Spirit. In the light of such a limitation in classical Christology, a study of the relationship between Christology and pneumatology becomes very significant. In this regard, the recent resurgence of Spirit Christology in the West adds a new dimension to contemporary Christological reflection. The theologians who are engaged in this pursuit are of the view that Christological reflection is incomplete without reflecting upon pneumatology and vice versa.

This study identifies in particular at least three approaches in the contemporary European Spirit Christologies, namely, reconstruction, replacement and complementary approaches. Norman Hook attempts to reconstruct Christ, Spirit and the Trinity from the perspective of the Hebrew understanding of the Spirit. G. W. H. Lampe, by using the symbol God as Spirit replaces *Logos* Christology with a Spirit Christology. Jürgen Moltmann, John D. Zizioulas and David Coffey seek ways to complement *Logos* Christology with Spirit Christology.

While not denying the contributions of reconstruction and replacement approaches, this study adopts the complementary approach and shows that Spirit Christology not only enriches systematic theology but also is relevant to an Indian context. This is done by bringing the insights of two Indian theologians Pandipeddi Chenchiah and Swami Abhishiktānanda, who emphasise the centrality of the Spirit, in interaction with the strengths of Spirit Christology.

The study ends in offering a chapter on 'understanding Jesus Christ in India' using the Hindu concepts of Spirit that are expressed in the terms such as *ātman*, *antaryāmin*, *śakti* and *ānanda*. Drawing on some of the resources of Spirit Christology, it is argued that these concepts can explicate, illuminate and evoke some latent aspects of Christology.

Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

Signed:

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What began as an intellectual quest gradually gave way to a spiritual journey. In the quiet afternoon hours, sitting in the front pew, gazing at the icon of the Trinity in the altar of St Philip and James Church, Cheltenham, I have grown to feel God in everything.

To the Indwelling Presence of God

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Part One

Chapter One

Introduction

“Who do people say that I am?”¹

“Who do you say that I am?”²

“Who do people say that I am?” This was Jesus’ query about his own person. The disciples respond by saying that for some he is John the Baptist, for some he is Elijah, for others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Jesus continues to question the disciples; he asks, “Who do you say that I am?” Peter replies that he is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.³ This is a confession that comes out of the realisation that Jesus was not only a man but was more than a man. He is the Son of the living God. This is certainly one of the expressions of the significance and relevance of Jesus’ person in a particular context.

The significance and relevance of Christ needs to be worked out afresh in each context. This precisely is the focus of this study with a particular reference to the Indian context. Indian society is a religiously, culturally, ideologically pluralistic society and the Indian Church exists in a pluralistic situation. “In such a situation, the Church is faced with two issues—the self–identity of the Church and its role in society.”⁴ These two are interrelated. On the one hand, the Church has her own self–identity that is grounded in the faith of the Christian tradition and, on the other hand, the Church exists in relation to different religions, cultures and social groups in a particular context where the Church is situated.

¹ Mk 8:27.

² Mk 8:29.

³ Matt 16:13-16.

⁴ T. V. Philip, ‘Pluralism and the Early Church’, *Religion and Society*, xvii no. 3 (1970), 7-21, (p. 7).

This is a blessing to the Church so that the Church in relation to other traditions enriches her own spirituality and by doing so enriches other religions too. This study on 'Spirit Christology: An Indian Christian Perspective' is undertaken with the presumption that a Christology that has resources within it to enrich the church as well as other religious traditions, particularly Hindu tradition, might be relevant and meaningful in the Indian context.

Spirit Christology has become a popular subject in contemporary theology. Theologians who are exploring this new approach do so in critical interaction with *Logos* Christology. Hence, in the following sections we shall elaborate on *Logos* Christology, some of the difficulties with *Logos* Christology, the challenges for contemporary Christological thinking, the emergence of Spirit Christology and its relevance to the Indian context.

1.1 *Logos* Christology

As we have mentioned above, there are many expressions about Jesus in the New Testament. John Macquarrie comments that several titles such as Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah, Lord, High Priest and so on express the "inner feeling of God's people concerning Jesus of Nazareth."⁵ Each of these titles is a response to different historical and cultural situations of the time. When Christian faith moved from the Jewish world to Graeco-Roman culture, when the writers of the New Testament realised Greek to be a more effective medium than Aramaic, the apologetic task took the language and thought forms of the new world it encountered.⁶ *Logos* Christology is the result of such an

⁵ John Macquarrie, 'Humanity of Christ', *Theology*, 74 no. 612 (1971), 243-250, (p. 243).

⁶ Robin H. S. Boyd, *India and the Latin Captivity of the Church: The Cultural Context of the Gospel* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 1. See also Philip, 'Pluralism and the Early Church', pp. 8-11.

encounter.⁷ The Eternal Word became flesh is the central message of the prologue to the fourth gospel. The post-biblical tradition looked to the *Logos* Christology of this Gospel.

The early Church theologians elaborated the expression of this faith. The term *Logos* was a familiar term to later Judaism and to Stoicism. At the beginning of the Christian era, the concept *Logos* in Hellenistic philosophy had several meanings.⁸ It represented universal reason, the divine principle of creativity that is immanent in the world or the divine seed that is present in everything that exists.⁹ In the Old Testament, the term *dabar* meant the revelatory function of Yahweh.¹⁰ What the Greek philosophers considered as the universal *Logos* and Jews as Yahweh's revelation has become flesh for the Christian writers. *Logos* is Son in his pre-existence, a distinct divine person alongside the Father.¹¹ Macquarrie reflects, "... The Logos had been there from the beginning as the inner meaning of all things, the expression of the being of God. To call Jesus the Word was to identify him with the meaning of Being and so to institute what may be called an ontological Christology."¹² As they considered revelation in terms of the *Logos*-Son concept and

⁷ John Meyendorff, 'Christ's Humanity: The Paschal Mystery', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 31 no. 1 (1987), 5-40, (p. 7).

⁸ The term *Logos* means "speech, word, saying, mention, rumour, cause, reason, purpose, instance, supposition, discourse, explanation, account, promise, ratio, proportion." Harry T. Hiorides, "Logos" in *Collins Greek-English, English-Greek Dictionary* (Glasgow: William Collins Sons, 1988). See also *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1988), 1101-1107. According to J. Harold Ellens, the term *Logos* also means 'report', 'assertion' or a 'matter' under discussion. See 'Logos' in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, David Noel Freedman, ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 200), pp. 819-820.

⁹ John Macquarrie, 'Some Problems of Modern Christology', *Indian Journal of Theology*, 23 (1974), 155-175, (p. 158). In Stoic thought, *Logos* is the organising principle of the universe. R. H. S. Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India* (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1977), p. 129.

¹⁰ J. Dupuis, 'The Cosmic Christ in the Early Fathers', *The Indian Journal of Theology*, 15 no. 3 (1966), 106-121, (p. 106). Boyd points out that the term *Logos* refers to God's creative Word in Gen 1:1. As creative Word, it recalls the function of Wisdom's role in creation in Wisdom literature (Prov 8:22-31). It refers to prophetic Word in Prophetic literature (Is 55:11). Boyd, *Khristadvaita*, p. 129. For Greek and Jewish understandings of *Logos*, see also Donald Guthrie, "Logos", in *New Testament Theology* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1981), pp. 321-323.

¹¹ Piet J. A. M. Schoonenberg, *The Christ* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1972), p. 55.

¹² Macquarrie, 'Some Problems of Modern Christology', p. 158.

Jesus as its historical manifestation, it became necessary to explain how the humanity of Jesus related to *Logos* or the union of the Word with the human element in Christ.

The early Church theologians maintained a distinction between Christ's pre-temporal oneness with the Father and his temporal manifestation, following the Stoic distinction between the immanent word and the expressed word.¹³ The *Logos* was divine thought and the divine Word. Thus, this term was well suited to explain the mediatory role of Christ. For example, Justin Martyr (c.110 –165 CE) influenced by the Stoic idea of two aspects of *Logos* as immanent word and word expressed, interpreted the pre-existent Christ as the unexpressed, immanent Word of the Father and the manifested Christ as the Word expressed or the spoken *Logos* of the Father. The seed of the *Logos* is found in all men but it is entirely made manifest only in Christ.¹⁴ The universal reason or *Logos* has now assumed human form in Jesus Christ.¹⁵ The *Logos* is the governing principle in the God-man Jesus Christ, since the *Logos* takes the place of the human rational soul of the man Jesus.¹⁶ We encounter a type of ontological Christology here, which is known as 'Word-flesh or *Logos*-flesh' Christology.

Similarly, Origen (c.185 – c.254 CE) distinguishes between the spiritual descent of the *Logos* and his coming in the flesh.¹⁷ He works with the doctrine of the pre-existence of souls. He maintains the pre-existence of all souls and that Jesus' soul was attached to the *Logos* with mystical devotion and became united with Jesus.¹⁸ Thus, Godhead and

¹³ J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th rev. edn (London: A & C Black, 1958), p. 96.

¹⁴ Dupuis, 'The Cosmic Christ in the Early Fathers', p. 111. For Justin, the Old Testament *theophanies* are various manifestations of the *Logos* and the highest manifestation is found in Jesus Christ. The *Logos* the rational principle in its entirety became human in Christ.

¹⁵ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 96.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

¹⁷ Dupuis, 'The Cosmic Christ in the Early Fathers', p. 120.

¹⁸ John Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ: A Study of Pattern in Christology* (London: Cambridge university Press, 1967), p. 111.

manhood are fused and inextricably united.¹⁹ But, no matter how intimate the union between the *Logos* and the human soul of Jesus may be, Origen seems to locate the unity of God–man in the *Logos* Himself. In other words, the human soul was caught up in the *Logos* and it was the nature of the *Logos* that was predominant in Christ. The *Logos* directed the manhood. So finally, as it was for Justin, the Word is the governing principle in Christ.²⁰ Hence, it is again a Word–flesh type Christology with the emphasis on *Logos* as the governing principle of the God–man. Origen regards the Son as a second God. The Son is ontologically inferior to the Father and the Spirit is inferior to the Son.²¹ Thus, he taught the ontological subordinationism of the Son and the Spirit.

In Clement of Alexandria (d. before 216 CE), the *Logos* finds its highest expression in Jesus Christ since the *Logos* assumes Jesus' humanity. The *Logos* has entered into or attached to human flesh. The *Logos* has clothed himself in a man. The divine person possessed a human nature. So Christ is both human and divine, God and man. Although Clement maintained the reality of incarnation, by emphasising the divine element in Jesus he presents a *docetic* view of Christ. The “directive principle” (Stoic language) in Jesus Christ is the *Logos*.²² Jesus was human in his body and soul yet in the divine and human union some of the fundamental characteristics of the humanity are lost.

In the West, Tertullian (c.160–223 CE) interprets the Son as the eternal thought or reason or Word of God who comes forth from the Father by eternal generation. The Word, being divine Spirit, entered into the Virgin and received flesh from her. Thus, Christ had a

¹⁹ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 155.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

²¹ Alasdair I. C. Heron, *The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit in the Bible, in the History of Christian Thought and in Recent Theology* (London: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1983), p. 71.

²² Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, pp. 153-154.

genuine and complete humanity. Nevertheless, the governing principle in Christ was the Word. The divine Spirit took flesh and brought man and God into unity.²³

Arius (256 – 336 CE), in his interest to maintain monotheistic belief, denied that the Son is of the eternal substance of the Father or even similar to the Father but rather the Son was created by the Father out of nothing. So the Son is not consubstantial with the Father.²⁴ Thus, he emphasised the subordinationism of the Son. Jesus was divine but not of the same substance with the Father. Jesus was a demigod, half–man and half–divine. The Word united himself to the human body and took the place of the rational soul in the human Jesus.²⁵

Against Arius, Athanasius (c.296 – 373 CE) defined Son as eternal, the image, radiance and wisdom of the Father. The Son belongs to the Father's substance. Since the Father and the Son are one, the Son is God.²⁶ The starting point for Athanasius is John 1:14. It is a true incarnation. The *Logos* became flesh. Christ and the divine *Logos* are one. Along with the Biblical material, Athanasius uses the Stoic idea that the *Logos* who animates the whole cosmos animates Christ's body and soul.²⁷ So the Word is the governing principle in Jesus Christ who is human as well as divine.²⁸ Hence, Athanasius' Christology is also a Word–flesh Christology. Kelly says, "This brings us face to face with the central problem of his Christology, viz. whether he envisaged Christ's humanity as including a human rational soul, or regarded the *Logos* as taking the place of one."²⁹

²³ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, pp. 150-151.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 227. See also John Meyendorff, 'Reply to Jürgen Moltmann's "the Unity of the Triune God"', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 28 no. 3 (1984), 183-188, (p. 184).

²⁵ Ibid., p. 281.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 245. See also Meyendorff, 'Christ's Humanity: The Paschal Mystery', p. 7.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 285.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 285-286.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 286-287.

The Nicene Creed (325 CE)³⁰ confirmed that the Son is of one substance with the Father. However, it does not offer a clear statement about the unity between *Logos* and the man Jesus. The Christological discussions continued over the issue of how the divinity and humanity were maintained in one person.

Apollinaris (c.310–c.390 CE) emphasises the substantial oneness of the flesh with the Word because the flesh cannot exist by itself. It needed the support of the Word for its existence.³¹ The Word gives vital energy and movement to the God–man.³² The absolute oneness of the flesh with the Word makes Christ a heavenly man worthy of worship.³³ This again is a Word–flesh Christology. Divine *Logos* assumed human flesh but not the human spirit of Christ at the incarnation. So the mind of Jesus is the mind of the *Logos* and Christ's nature is the fusion of human flesh and divine *Logos*. Apollinaris had soteriological motives for presenting such a view of Christ. If Christ was only a man, he could not have saved humanity and, if he was only God, he could not have saved humanity through suffering.³⁴ Therefore, Christ has to be both man and God, the man with the mind of the *Logos*. Thus, he presented a *docetic* Christology.³⁵

³⁰ We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only-begotten, that is, from the substance of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things came into being, things in heaven and things on earth, who because of us humans and because of our salvation came down and became incarnate, becoming human, suffered and rose again on the third day, ascended to the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead; And in the Holy Spirit. But as for those who say, there was when He was not, and before being born He was not, and that He came into existence out of nothing, or who assert that the son of God is of a different hypostasis or substance, or is created, or is subject to alteration or change—these the catholic church anathematizes. See J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd edn (Harlow: Longman, 1972), pp. 215-216.

³¹ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 291.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 292.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 294-295.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 291. See also Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, p. 52.

³⁵ See Kenneth Paul Wesche, 'The Union of God and Man in Jesus Christ in the Thought of Gregory of Nazianzus', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 28 no. 2 (1984), 83-98, (pp. 90-91).

Likewise, the Alexandrian School maintained a *Logos*–flesh trajectory. The emphasis was on the incarnation of the *Logos* and the divinity of Christ. In the incarnation, Christ’s humanity was lost in the divinity. So for Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444 CE) the starting point was the *Logos* who became man. *Logos* assumed human nature. The human nature (*physis*) of Christ was rooted in the substance (*hypostasis*) of the *Logos*.³⁶ The Word was truly united to the human nature since the human nature belonged to the Word from the moment of its conception.³⁷ In Christ, the divine and the human are united in such a way that Mary can be called the *theotokos*, the mother of God. Christ is God and man and in dignity and honour must be worshipped since the union of Word and human is worthy of worship.³⁸

The Word and humanity are united in the same way as the union of soul and body in a human being.³⁹ Cyril’s soteriological interests are obvious. He wished to show that Jesus of Nazareth was God, the divine Word in human flesh who became flesh for the redemption of humans.⁴⁰ The Word takes flesh and also gives life–giving energy to the flesh; thus the humanity becomes life–giving. However, he maintains that the Word did not suffer in his own nature but suffered in the flesh of Jesus, which is truly the flesh of the Word.⁴¹ While only God can effect redemption the human nature suffers. Through the *communicatio idiomatum* the suffering of the human nature becomes the suffering of the *Logos* himself.⁴²

³⁶ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 319. See also Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, p. 63. Knox says “This way of understanding how a pre–existing divine being could become an actual human being became orthodox teaching and has dominated the Church’s thinking about the ‘person’ of Christ...” Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, pp. 63–64.

³⁷ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 320.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 313–314.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 322.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 319.

The theologians of the Antiochean School wished to maintain the full humanity of Christ without at the same time denying the divinity of Christ. For them, the divinity had its residence in the humanity of Jesus. They considered the divine–human union as connection or conjunction. They spoke of such a conjunction of the *Logos* with Jesus in the womb of Mary and this grew as Jesus grew, the highest degree of conjunction is seen on the cross and in the resurrection. Thus, for Diodorus of Tarsus (d. 378 CE) the union between the Word and the flesh is not one of fusion or mixture. The Word dwells in the flesh of Jesus as in a temple. The indwelling of the Word in Jesus is similar to the indwelling of the Word in the prophets. The difference between the prophets and Jesus is that in the prophets the inspiration of the Spirit is occasional and fragmentary whereas Jesus was completely and permanently filled by the Wisdom of the Word.⁴³

For Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428 CE) the starting point is the humanity of Jesus Christ. He challenges the position that the Word is the directive principle in Christ replacing his rationality and animating his whole corporeal structure.⁴⁴ In Christ's human nature, the Godhead dwells as in a temple. The union between *Logos* and Christ's human nature is by grace.⁴⁵ So he speaks about two natures and one *prosopon*.⁴⁶ Ultimately he interprets Christ as one person, the result of the coming together of the Word and humanity.⁴⁷

For Nestorius (d. c. 451 CE) the Godhead exists in the man and the man exists in the Godhead without any confusion or mixture. Nestorius does not speak about *hypostatic*

⁴³ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 303.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 304.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

⁴⁶ Theodore uses the term *prosopon* to explain the unity of God and man in Jesus Christ. Though God and man have their own nature and roles, there was underlying unity of the two. Further, using the term *hypostasis*, he says that in Christ there are two *hypostaseis* divine and human having separate existences; but Christ as a concrete man characterized by one *hypostasis*. Seely Beggiani, 'A Case for Logocentric Theology', *Theological Studies*, 32 no. 1 (1971), 371-406, (p. 396).

⁴⁷ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 306. Also, Meyendorff, 'Christ's Humanity: The Paschal Mystery', p. 8.

union. In *hypostatic* union, the separateness of the natures is obliterated. He wishes to maintain both the impassibility of the Word and the humanness of Christ. Hence, he prefers to use the term conjunction rather than union. Man is the temple in which the Word dwells. The indwelling in the man Christ transcends the indwelling of God in other human beings such as prophets and apostles.⁴⁸ The two natures interpenetrate each other as the persons of the Trinity interpenetrate one another.

As a result, the person of Christ is inseparable and indivisible.⁴⁹ The divinity and humanity existed side by side, each nature retaining their respective unique properties. By nature, he meant the concrete character of a thing. Thus, each nature has its own *prosopon* and *hypostasis*. By *prosopon* he meant "its external aspect, or form, as an individual."⁵⁰ Therefore, each nature is "objectively real."⁵¹ In the incarnate Christ, there were two persons, the divine *Logos* and the man Jesus. The divine *Logos* coexisted with the human Jesus. In Christ, there were two *hypostaseis* but one *prosopon*.⁵² Thus, he speaks of the person of Christ in dualistic terms.

This is a Word-man Christology since it speaks of the conjunction of the man and the divine *Logos* in the incarnate Christ. Mary was the mother of the human Christ. Hence, she is *Christotokos* not *theotokos*. There is no place for *communicatio idiomatum*, that is the communication of attributes from one nature to another. Therefore, the idea of the suffering of the *Logos* has no place here. Divine and human in Christ are not essentially united, it is not a substantial union nor it is personal but rather it is moral.

⁴⁸ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 314.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 314-315.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 315.

Thus, we see two types of Christologies developed in the early Church, namely Word–flesh or *Logos–sarx* and Word–man or *Logos–anthropos* types, leading to a great crisis in the fifth century. Reflecting upon the Christological controversies in the fourth and fifth centuries Piet Schoonenberg says that in thinking about Christ’s personhood, Aristotelian philosophy played a vital role. “Philosophy’s place is explicitly indicated in the Aristotelian model of science in which conclusions reached by way of syllogism play a great role. For example, a premise taken from philosophy can be joined with one taken from revelation.”⁵³

Similarly, John McIntyre shows that the early Church’s reflection drew mostly on Aristotelian categories. They maintained a firm distinction between the human and the divine nature of Jesus Christ. The description of Jesus in dualistic terms as divine and human is not purely scriptural although scripture does show him to be more than human.⁵⁴ But when philosophical language entered the scene with the translation of the gospel message into the categories of Greek thought, a wedge was driven between the humanity and the divinity of Christ. The reflections of the early church followed Aristotelian concepts such as primary and secondary substances to interpret Christ’s divinity and humanity.⁵⁵

According to these categories, the individual person, who is a primary substance, belongs to the species of man, which is the secondary substance. Applying this to Jesus Christ,

⁵³ Piet Schoonenberg, ‘The Theologian’s Calling, Freedom and Constraint’, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 19 no. 2 (1982), 92-118, (p. 99).

⁵⁴ John McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology: Studies in the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, 1966, reprint edn (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), pp. 84-86. Also, Klass Runia, *The Present-Day Christological Debate* (England: IVP, 1984), pp. 89-90.

⁵⁵ McIntyre writes: “In the actual execution of its task the two–nature model in most of its forms draws heavily on the logic of Aristotle’s *Categoriae*, C.5. ... It deals with the very important distinction between primary substance (*prōtē ousia*) and secondary substance (*deutera ousia*).” McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 87.

Jesus is the primary substance and humanity, the secondary substance, is predicated of him.⁵⁶ For Aristotle without the primary substance the secondary substance does not exist.⁵⁷ McIntyre points out that in the discussions of early church the primary substance was substituted for *hypostasis*, the secondary substance was substituted for *physis*, and the syllogism was “no *physis anhypostatos*.”⁵⁸ This idea can be seen influencing all shades of Christological controversies in the fourth and fifth centuries.⁵⁹

For example, in Antiochean School that stresses the difference between the two natures, in Christ both God and man are said to have two *hypostaseis*. In Nestorianism ‘no *physis* without a *hypostasis*’ appears with the affirmation that in Christ there are two *physeis* and two *hypostaseis*. In Christ, there is man who is passible, corruptible and mortal and God who is impassible, incorruptible and eternal.⁶⁰ For Cyril “the human nature of Jesus Christ is a *physis anhypostatos*.”⁶¹ This implies that it is “the *hypostasis* of the divine nature of the *Logos* who is the subject of the incarnational situation.”⁶²

⁵⁶ For Plato “universals exist *ante res* – the Forms pre-exist the particulars which embody them.” For Aristotle “universals exist *in rebus*, that is, only as realised in particular subjects.” The nominalists argued “universals exist *post res* – we derive them conceptually from the world of existent things which are qualified by various attributes.” McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, pp. 88-89.

⁵⁷ McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 89.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 90.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 91.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 95

⁶² Ibid.

The Creed of Chalcedon (451 CE)⁶³ was an effort to avoid the Antiochean tendency towards dualistic terms and the Alexandrian tendency towards monophysitism. Christ is both human and divine eventually developed into a 'one person and two natures' doctrine. In the Chalcedonian affirmation, the two natures of Christ concur in one person and the person here refers to the *Logos* not the person of Christ. "Four factors need to be balanced for an accurate understanding of Jesus: deity, humanity, the unity of one person, and the distinction of the two natures."⁶⁴ However, in the final analysis the *hypostasis* of the divine is the subject of the incarnational situation.

The Post-Chalcedonian formulation of Leontius of Byzantium (c.485–543 CE) follows the same trend of Aristotelian logic although he redefines the theory of *anhypostasia*.

Leontius, contrary to the theory of *anhypostasia*, that is, the human *physis* of Jesus Christ had no *hypostasis* of its own, developed the theory of *enhyposstasia*. Drawing on Aristotelian logic, he defines nature as universal, which is thought of in terms of "genus, species and essential qualities and properties."⁶⁵ Hence, in his Christology, nature refers to the universal.⁶⁶ He defines *hypostasis* in reference to the particular. It refers to the "particular and individual existence"⁶⁷ of any single entity. Therefore, a particular entity

⁶³ We then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with us according to the manhood; in all things like unto us without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the virgin Mary, the mother of God, according to the manhood; one and the same Christ, son, Lord, only-begotten, in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably, the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one person and one subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons but one and the same Son and only-begotten. God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the creed of the Holy Fathers has handed down to us. See Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, pp. 339-340.

⁶⁴ Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), p. 392.

⁶⁵ McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 96.

⁶⁶ For a detailed discussion on this point, see Richard Cross, 'Individual Natures in the Christology of Leontius of Byzantium', *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 10 no. 2 (2002), 245-265.

⁶⁷ McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 96.

shares in nature that which is universal to all fellow-members of that particular genus.⁶⁸ In Leontius' view, the human nature of Jesus Christ has no *hypostasis* of its own but it finds its *hypostasis* in the divine *Logos*. Thus, it is not *anhypostasia* but *enhypostasia* that is emphasised by him. It is *physis enhypostatos* rather than *physis anhypostatos*. Jesus' particular characteristics as well as the essential qualities of the genus, in this case the essential qualities of human to which Jesus belongs, are attributed to the divine *hypostasis*.⁶⁹ McIntyre comments, "In this way he has secured a form of Chalcedonianism against the principle that it is impermissible, even impossible, to affirm a *physis* without a *hypostasis*."⁷⁰

However, the theory of *enhypostasia* is not without problems. The human nature of Christ has no personal centre or ego. Thus, as in the theory of *anhypostasia* the human nature of Christ is not recognised in its own terms. It makes Christ's human nature an abstraction.⁷¹ The manhood of Christ does not exist independently of God the Son. In other words, the human nature of Christ does not have its own *hypostasis*; it has its *hypostasis* in the divine person of the *Logos*. According to McIntyre, the human *physis* of Jesus Christ has no human *hypostasis* is assumed in the Chalcedonian formulation although it may be argued that this lack does not reduce the true humanity of Christ.⁷² We shall enumerate in the next section the various difficulties with *Logos* Christology.

⁶⁸ McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 96. See also J. Meyendorff, 'Chalcedonians and Monophysites after Chalcedon', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 10 no. 2 (1964), 16-36, (pp. 21-23).

⁶⁹ McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 97.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 97, refers to W. Norman Pittenger, *The Word Incarnate: A Study of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ* (London: Nisbet, 1959), pp. 100-3. See also Duncan Watson, 'Why Chalcedon?' *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 39 no. 1 (1982), 3-22, (p. 4).

⁷² McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 95.

1.2 Difficulties with *Logos* Christology

The Nicene and Chalcedonian Christologies are descending Christologies or high Christologies with God as the starting point. The pre-existence of Christ is of paramount importance in any descending Christology. The pre-existent *Logos* comes down and in history assumes human flesh.⁷³ This is the Christology presented in the prologue to the Gospel of John and in the School of Alexandria. They moved away from the historical Jesus to the eternal *Logos*. The Human nature of Jesus is uneasily linked to the *Logos*.

Macquarrie calls this model the “mythico-metaphysical model.”⁷⁴ Its essence is God descending from heaven. Hence, this gives way to the question: How does God become man? Macquarrie says, “This way of formulating the question is in itself an encouragement to the *docetic* tendency, for it permanently relegates Christ’s humanity to second place.”⁷⁵ Gerald O’Collins comments, “He looks like a man, speaks like a man, suffers and dies like a man. But underneath he is divine, and his genuine humanity suspect.”⁷⁶ According to Norman Pittenger,

...a fundamental difficulty with the Christology of the patristic age is that while in word it asserted the reality of the humanity of Jesus Christ, *in fact* it did not take that humanity with sufficient seriousness.... The tendency of Christological thinking in the mainstream of what was believed to be ‘orthodox’ was far more heavily weighted on the side of the divinity than of the humanity in Jesus.⁷⁷

This raises the question of how it can be justified that Christ is *homoousia* with the Father and *homoousia* with created humanity. In other words, how can Christ be *homoousia* with

⁷³ Gregory, Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, 33, no. 2 (1989), 127-145 (p. 143).

⁷⁴ Macquarrie, ‘Some Problems of Modern Christology’, p. 160.

⁷⁵ Macquarrie, ‘Some Problems of Modern Christology’, p. 160.

⁷⁶ Gerald O’Collins, *What Are They Saying About Jesus* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), p. 2. John Breck says “... from this point of view Orthodox Christology must be characterised as ‘crypto-monophysite’ insofar as it affirms that in His earthly incarnation, Jesus Christ remained *essentially* what he had been from all eternity, namely ‘of the *divine* nature.” John Breck, ‘Reflections on the “Problem” of Chalcedonian Christology’, *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, 33 no. 2 (1989), 147-157, (p. 147).

⁷⁷ Pittenger, *The Word Incarnate*, p. 89.

created humanity if he does not have his own human *hypostasis*? How does Christ relate to the entire race of humankind? Can Christ be said to be a representative man or how do we affirm Christ's solidarity with all humankind? *Anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia* are difficult ideas to speak of Christ's solidarity with humanity.⁷⁸ Also, the high Christologies can become a means of oppression and dehumanization since they emphasise the divinity and Lordship of Christ rather than presenting him as a humble and humiliated human who showed solidarity with the poor and the oppressed.

A further difficulty is in "conceiving the relation of divine being to human being and of their union in Christ."⁷⁹ Chalcedon affirms both unity and duality in the God-man. The two natures in Christ remain without division and without separation and without confusion. However, despite this affirmation of the unity of natures, there is an emphasis on the distinction of natures. In McIntyre's view, the Chalcedonian pattern "absorbs all the divine and all the human that is acknowledged by scripture to Jesus, but adds something unknown to scripture: the distinction of natures."⁸⁰ Piet Schoonenberg says divine and human are seen as dissimilar in the two-nature doctrine. They appear in a competitive relationship. Had they seen the divine and human in an analogous way, theories on the *anhypostasis* of Christ's humanity would never have arisen.⁸¹ Also, reflecting upon the distinction between Jesus' earthly and glorified life, Schoonenberg asks whether the proportion between the divine and the human in Christ is the same during these two phases of his existence.⁸²

⁷⁸ Macquarrie, 'Some Problems of Modern Christology', p. 161.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 160.

⁸⁰ Schoonenberg, *The Christ*, p. 57. See also Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, p. viii.

⁸¹ Schoonenberg, *The Christ*, pp. 62-63. Likewise, Hendrikus Berkhof asks: "How can we conceive of Christ as composed of two mutually excluding realities, divine and human? What then is the nature of the one person? That question was not answered in Chalcedon, and it created many doctrinal conflicts in succeeding centuries to this very day." Hendrikus Berkhof, 'Who Do You Say That I Am?' *The Reformed World*, 32 (1973), 291-305, (p. 301).

⁸² Schoonenberg, *The Christ*, p. 64.

There is also a difficulty concerning understanding of the saving significance of Jesus Christ.⁸³ William M. Thompson remarks, "In our modern assessment of Chalcedon, this praxis dimension is characteristically absent in the ancient text."⁸⁴ The early church theologians were seeking something that is intellectually coherent. Hence, their formulations focus on the ontological status of Christ. By centring on Christ's identity, they make Christology essentialistic. They present the *noetic* significance of Christ rather than his saving significance.⁸⁵ Thus, the other aspects of the Christ event, such as Christ's earthly life, mission, death and resurrection, do not receive sufficient attention. Further, the interpretation of Christ's ontological constitution in these early centuries is inextricably connected with the understanding of God as immutable and impassible. God became truly human but God could not suffer and die.

Going back to the early church theologians, we see Tertullian using the word *apatheia* when talking about God. He describes God as impassible.⁸⁶ Neither the Father nor the Son undergoes suffering. The Son suffers according to his human nature.⁸⁷ For Justin, *apatheia* refers to a divine attribute.⁸⁸ Similarly for Clement of Alexandria, *apatheia* is a divine quality. He describes God as the one who is "free of passions, anger and desire."⁸⁹

⁸³ Breck, 'Reflections on the "Problem" of Chalcedonian Christology', p. 149.

⁸⁴ William M. Thompson, *The Jesus Debate: A Survey and Synthesis* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), p. 331, cited by Havrilak, 'Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today', p. 131. Also Paulo D. Siepierski says that in the 3rd and the 4th centuries the political social oppression of the people, the widening gulf between the rich and the poor, the taxation structure, situation of the slaves in rural and urban areas, situation of women and the marginalised was appalling and "we are left with the question of why the Council did not show concern for the poor, who constituted the majority of the church." Paulo D. Siepierski, 'Nicaea and the Marginalised', *Theology Digest*, 38 no. 1 (1991), 23-29, (p. 26).

⁸⁵ Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), p. 19. Also, Walter Kasper, *Jesus the Christ* (London: Burns & Oates, 1976), p. 238.

⁸⁶ Augustine Michael Casiday, 'Apatheia and Sexuality in the Thought of Augustine and Cassian', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 45 no. 4 (2001), 359-394, (p. 360), citing *Apologeticum* 10, 50.9; *De anima* 12.

⁸⁷ Casiday, 'Apatheia and Sexuality', p. 360, citing *Adversus Praxean*, 29.

⁸⁸ Casiday, 'Apatheia and Sexuality', p. 365, citing *I Apologia*, 25.2.2.

⁸⁹ Casiday, 'Apatheia and Sexuality', p. 366, citing *Stromata*, 4.23; 151.1.

Augustine Michael Casiday says that the usage of this term continues “up to and beyond the turn of the fifth century.”⁹⁰

In Origen’s view, in Christ each nature preserves its own characteristics. The *Logos* does not undergo the experiences of human nature. When Jesus says ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful’ (Matt 26:38) and ‘Now is my soul troubled’ (John 12:27) it is the human Jesus speaks. All these refer to His human soul.⁹¹ Kelly points out,

It must be recognized that the incarnation as such really stood outside the logic of Origen’s system. While assigning it a place, out of loyalty to God’s revealed word and the Church’s tradition, he did not regard the Son’s participation in human nature as either permanent or essential.⁹²

Tertullian maintains that the Word became man since only by becoming man could he bring salvation. Godhood and manhood, divine spirit and human flesh, immortality and mortality, strength and weakness, existed side by side. Nevertheless, it was only Christ’s humanity that suffered and not the spirit. Yet, he could speak of God’s sufferings since for him the interchange of characteristics is possible.⁹³ In this view, the humanity is active without diminishing the unity between humanity and the *Logos*.

Athanasius interprets the expression that the *Logos* took flesh as the *Logos* creating his own body in the Virgin’s womb. Hence, the *Logos* appropriates his own body to himself. If the *Logos* had taken another body, the redemptive function could not have been accomplished. Only God can save, so the Son is God. It is a true incarnation the *Logos* becomes flesh.⁹⁴ By taking flesh, the Son does not change.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Casiday, 'Apatheia and Sexuality', p. 360.

⁹¹ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, pp. 155-156.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁹³ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 152.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

This conceptual dissonance was not overcome in Nicaea despite the *homoousion* doctrine. It identified “one who underwent gestation, birth, growth, a human career, rejection, torture and execution as ‘true God’” who cannot suffer.⁹⁶

For Cyril, as John Meyendorff explains, “the *Logos* was the only *subject* of death on Golgotha is an essential point of his polemics against Nestorius. It did not imply that God could suffer or die in His very nature or essence: the *incarnated Logos* suffered death, not the divine nature.”⁹⁷

Indeed, for the early church theologians Christ’s salvific significance is crucial. The soteriological motive was at the centre of their Christological discussions and they rightly did so but the categories they used did not help to maintain this possibility of Christ. If Christ’s humanity cannot exist on its own but only finds its existence in the *hypostasis* of the *Logos* then Christ cannot be the redeemer of human nature. The divine gift of salvation “could not be realistically brought into the world of humanity, unless the divine Giver was Himself united with humanity.”⁹⁸ Christ cannot redeem what he did not assume.

Further, speaking about Chalcedon, Karl Rahner has shown that Chalcedonian two–natures (*physeis*) and one person (*prosopon*) is insufficient to explain Christ’s ‘function’ as mediator and is misleading if we are thinking in terms of contemporary understandings of

⁹⁶ Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology I: The Triune God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 125.

⁹⁷ John Meyendorff, ‘New Life in Christ: Salvation in Orthodox Theology’, *Theological Studies*, 50 no. 3 (1989), 481-499, (p. 490).

⁹⁸ H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit* (Great Britain, Digsweil Place: James Nisbet, 1958), p. 236.

'nature' and 'person.'⁹⁹ What do *persona*, *hypostasis*, *prosopon* mean when they are applied to a human being? There is also a difficulty with the term 'nature.' Nature refers to the genus of a creature. Nature as the conception of humanity poses problems not only for the understanding of humans in terms of nature but also for the understanding of Jesus. It indicates that Jesus assumed such a "vague generalisation"¹⁰⁰ at the incarnation. Christ shares with us the common human nature. The early church theologians wished to affirm that Christ redeems the whole of humanity. But, in their interest in affirming the universality of Christ's human nature, they did not do justice to the particularity of Christ.¹⁰¹

Hence, there is a difficulty concerning terminologies. As we have observed, terminologies played a crucial role in the early controversies. Terms such as *ousia*, *hypostasis*, *physis* and *prosopon* were used in the elaboration of Christology. But we are not supplied with set definitions of these terms. Initially, *ousia* and *hypostasis* referred to the common divine substance. Athanasius uses *ousia* and *hypostasis* synonymously.¹⁰² In the Athanasian Creed, "the Greek *ousia* is represented by the Latin *substantia*, and the Greek *hypostasis* by the Latin *persona*."¹⁰³ For Apollinaris *hypostasis* is synonymous with *prosopon*.¹⁰⁴ At the Council of Nicaea, *ousia* and *hypostasis* were used as synonyms. Later on, these two terms were differentiated, *ousia* referring to common divine substance and *hypostasis* to individual essence. Also the term *physis* was used synonymously with *hypostasis*. Seely Beggiani observes that

⁹⁹ Karl Rahner, 'Current Problems in Christology', *Theological Investigations* 1, trans. by Cornelius Ernst (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974), pp. 149-200.

¹⁰⁰ McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 105.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 106.

¹⁰² Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 252.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 253.

¹⁰⁴ Wesche, 'The Union of God and Man in Jesus Christ in the Thought of Gregory of Nazianzus', p. 84.

... for Apollinaris *hypostasis* was equivalent to “spirit”; for Theodore of Mopsuestia it referred to a subject capable of separate existence, while *prosōpon* referred to the composition of God and man; for Cyril, *hypostasis* has the meaning of reality, a living being. At Chalcedon *hypostasis* had the meaning of that which exists by itself and in its own consistency.¹⁰⁵

Although Chalcedon and the subsequent attempt by Leontius did not intend to undermine the historicity of Jesus, the very terminologies they chose were unhelpful in affirming the historicity of Jesus Christ. The terms *anhypostasia* and *enhypostasia* undermine the historicity of Jesus Christ since the secondary substance, the *hypostasis*, is understandable only in terms of primary substance, the *physis*. The human nature of Jesus does not exist without the divine *Logos* (Chalcedonian position) and the human *physis* of Jesus finds its *hypostasis* in divine *Logos* (the position of Leontius), both subordinate the human Jesus to divine *Logos*.¹⁰⁶ Thus, the linguistic issue and the theological issue are interrelated.

Finally, classical Christology labours to explain the relationship between the Father and the Son but the relationship between the Son and the Spirit is not given due importance. Classical Christology overlooks the role of the Holy Spirit in incarnation. In short, as directed by the classical formulation, we think of God as immutable and impassible, Christ as the pre-existent *Logos* which existed along with the Father and became flesh in history, and the Spirit as a mere appendix to Christology.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit itself was not given sufficient attention in the early theological discussions. The early church concentrated on the Son and paid little attention to the Spirit. “When they did eventually turn their attention to the Spirit, they did so with a

¹⁰⁵ Beggiani, 'A Case for Logocentric Theology', p. 398. See also Runia, *The Present-Day Christological Debate*, pp. 103-105.

¹⁰⁶ McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology*, p. 95.

certain Logos logic.”¹⁰⁷ Arian controversy was not about the Spirit but about the relations of the Son to the Father. Consequently, Nicaea did not say much about the person and work of the Spirit. Likewise, the Creed of Constantinople in 381 contributed little to the issues concerning the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁸ Later on when the *homoousia* of the Spirit was asserted, it was done as a “necessary consequence of the *homousia* of the Son, and not as a result of any adequate independent inquiry based on the work of the Holy Spirit.”¹⁰⁹ Further, the *filioque*¹¹⁰ addition to the creed of Constantinople stating that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son (as the West claimed) not only divided the church (since the Eastern churches believed that the Spirit proceeds only from the Father) but also divested the Spirit of full personality.

Hence, beneath the *Logos* Christology lies how we think about the nature of God, the person and work of Christ and of the Spirit. Hence, these difficulties set an agenda for

¹⁰⁷ Kilian McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' *Theological Studies*, 46 (1985), 191-227, (p. 194), citing Oliver Clement, *Le visage interieur* (Paris: Stock, 1978), p.83. The early church theologians spoke very little about the Spirit. Origen, Philo, Athenogoras spoke of the role of the Spirit in the writing of Scripture. By the late second century, theologians showed interest in emphasising the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Tertullian and Paul of Samosata referred to Spirit as God. Irenaeus considered Spirit as divine wisdom, an attribute of God. Origen conceived the Holy Spirit as part of the ontological Trinity. But according to him, the Spirit came into existence through the Son. Thus, he subordinated the Spirit to the Son. In the fourth century, Arius argued that the essence of the Spirit is different from the essence of the Son. According to Eusebius of Caesarea, the Spirit is third in the rank. The “full doctrinal understanding of the Holy Spirit, especially in relationship to the Father and the Son, was an accompaniment and a by-product of the christological work done in the fourth and fifth centuries.” The main reason for turning to the Spirit was to refute what the early church theologians considered as heretical teachings on the Spirit. For example, Athanasius argued for the divinity of the Spirit and the Spirit as one substance with the Father and the Son since he had to refute the ‘Tropici’ who engaged in the figurative exegesis of the Scripture. They maintained that the Spirit is an angel, taking support from Heb 1:14; Amos 4:13; Zech 11:9; I Timo 5:21, they thought of Spirit as a creature brought into existence out of nothingness. Basil argued that the Holy Spirit has the same glory and honour as the Father and the Son since he had to argue against Macedonians or Pneumatomachians or Spirit-fighters who denied the full deity of the Holy Spirit. They believed that the Spirit was only a created power or instrument of God in order to act in the world. Against this view, Basil affirmed the divinity of the Spirit. Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, Vol.3 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1983), pp. 848-851. See also Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, pp. 255-263. Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, pp. 64-65. Heron, *The Holy Spirit*, pp. 77-82.

¹⁰⁸ It added this about the Holy Spirit: ‘I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.’

¹⁰⁹ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 251.

¹¹⁰ About the *filioque* issue, see R. Birch Hoyle, 'Spirit (Holy), Spirit of God', in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921), 784-803, (pp. 798-799).

thinking afresh about the person and work of Christ as well as the person and work of the Spirit and the relationship of Christ and the Spirit to the Father.

1.3 An Agenda for Christology

Theologians have asked the question to what extent the fourth and the fifth century Christological debates are meaningful today.¹¹¹ In 1951, when the Christian world commemorated the 1500th anniversary of the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon, Jaroslav Pelikan raised a crucial question, “What is the relevance of all this today?”¹¹² In the same way, Frans Josef van Beeck asks, “Does the statement still have the same vigor and elucidating power it had for the early Church and for so many centuries afterward?”¹¹³ Gregory Havrilak thinks that dogmatic statements are statements of faith, and must never become the object of faith themselves. Thus theological terms and dogmatic formulations must never paralyze revelation.¹¹⁴ In Rahner’s view, if we continue to use a single Christological model the result might be “cryptogamous heresies.”¹¹⁵ He speaks of a theological “incompleteness of the formula” and in his view, the definition itself preserves such incompleteness.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Gregory Havrilak observes, “Albrecht Ritschl labelled the fifth century definition ‘disinterested knowledge.’ Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, p. 128, citing Albrecht Ritschl, *The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation III*, trans. H. R. McIntosh and A. B. Maculey, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902), p. 398. “D. M. Baillie charged that all criticism raised against Chalcedon is not unjust.” Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, p. 128, citing D. M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ* (New York: Scribners, 1954), p. 152. And in the view of Adolph von Harnack, “The Chalcedonian dogma is lost in philosophical theology.” Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, p. 128, citing Adolph von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, trans. N. Buchanan (New York: Dover, 1928), pp. 265-314.

¹¹² Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, p. 127, citing Jaroslav Pelikan, “Chalcedon After Fifteen Centuries,” *Concordia Theological Monthly*, Dec. 1951, p. 926.

¹¹³ Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, p. 140, citing Frans Josef van Beeck, *Christ Proclaimed: Christology in Rhetoric* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), p. 31. See also Fergusson David, ‘The Doctrine of Incarnation Today’, *Expository Times*, 113 no. 3 (2001), 75-79.

¹¹⁴ Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, p. 140.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, citing Karl Rahner, “What Is Heresy?” *Theological Investigations 5*, trans. by Karl-H. Kruger (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966) pp. 468-512.

¹¹⁶ Karl Rahner, “Current Problems in Christology,” p. 151.

In the early centuries, Christian faith was “confessed and formulated in symbols, rules of faith, dogmatic constitutions, dogmas and negatively in anathemas.”¹¹⁷ The whole age of the early church can be considered as a creedal age.¹¹⁸ The simple faith of the heart was confessed since faith was not a private affair.¹¹⁹ Creeds summarize or define the faith of the early church theologians. In doing so they provide boundaries, set parameters of legitimate theological discussion. Thus, they establish guidelines for theological discussion concerning the nature of Christ’s person and Christ’s relation to God. But they do not exhaust the meaning of Christ. Christology was not a closed and self-sufficient discipline for it is not a private affair. The early church theologians opened up the theological frontiers and made Christology meaningful and relevant to their culture. Therefore, we are not suggesting that we need to abandon the ancient Creeds. Gregory Havrilak says “while Rahner speaks about the incompleteness of the formula for him this is an incompleteness in doctrinal development that not only allows further growth, but in reality, demands on-going investigation while provoking serious research.”¹²⁰ In fact, for Rahner, Chalcedon is “a starting point of a spiritual movement of departure and return which is our guarantee...of having understood the ancient formula.”¹²¹ He further says,

We shall never stop trying to release ourselves from it, understand it with mind and heart, so that through it we might draw near to the ineffable, unapproachable, nameless God, whose will it was that we should find him in Jesus Christ and through Christ seek him. We shall never cease to return to this formula, because whenever it is necessary to say briefly what it is that we encounter in the ineffable truth which is our salvation, we shall always have recourse to the modest, sober clarity of the Chalcedonian formula.¹²²

¹¹⁷ Schoonenberg, “The Theologian’s Calling, Freedom and Constraint”, p. 96.

¹¹⁸ Graham Keith, ‘The Formulation of Creeds in the Early Church’, *Themelios*, 24 no. 1 (1998), 13-21, (p. 13).

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹²⁰ Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, pp. 129-130.

¹²¹ Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, p. 129, citing Karl Rahner, “On the Theology of the Incarnation,” *Theological Investigations*, 4 (New York: Seabury, 1974), p. 106.

¹²² Havrilak, ‘Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today’, p. 129, citing Karl Rahner, “Current Problems in Christology,” p. 150.

Therefore, Chalcedon is not an end but a beginning.¹²³ Chalcedon and the difficulties of the classical formulations themselves set an agenda for a contemporary Christology.

The Christological task today is unlike the early centuries that dwelt on the question of the ontological status of Jesus to focus on the humanity of Jesus in order to avoid *docetism* in Christology. The historical significance of Jesus needs to find adequate and careful attention in our Christological thinking without at the same time diminishing his divinity.¹²⁴ This is indeed the intention of Chalcedon. Jesus Christ is *homoousios* with God and *homoousios* with humanity. This affirms the transcendence and immanence of Christ, his historical and trans-historical dimensions. Our Christology must be able to maintain these two dimensions.

We need to articulate adequately the salvific significance of Jesus since soteriology is the basis of Christology.¹²⁵ Christology is not purely metaphysical, that is unrelated to human existence on earth. Yves Congar says, "Christology must be situated *within* Soteriology which embraces it."¹²⁶ The concepts of *apatheia* and the impassibility of God are no longer meaningful today, as has been argued strongly by a number of theologians such as Eberhard Jüngel, Jürgen Moltmann, Wolfhart Pannenberg and by the Liberation theologians generally. We need a Christology that emphasises the historical involvement of the divine in the human and creation and one that sees the divine, the human and the whole creation as interrelated.

¹²³ Karl Rahner, *Chalcedon –ende oder Anfang? Chalcedon III.3*, cited by Aloys Grillmaier, *Christ in Christian Tradition: From the Apostolic Age to Chalcedon (AD 451)* (Oxford: Mowbrays, 1975), p. 556.

¹²⁴ Roger Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology', *Theological Studies*, 53 no. 2 (1992), 257-287, (p. 257).

¹²⁵ Behr John, 'The Paschal Foundation of Christian Theology', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 45 no. 2 (2001), 115-136.

¹²⁶ Yves M. J. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, trans. by David Smith (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983), p. 165.

Further, Christology needs to play a critical role in the contemporary situation of the world. Christology must be relevant, meaningful and must respond to contemporary problems. It needs to question certain values and ideas that are taken for granted. As Roger Haight says, Christology “can only fulfill its apologetic task by being a critical discipline.”¹²⁷ In the face of ethnic conflicts, class and caste struggles, wars, political, social and religious oppression and poverty it is imperative to express theologically what it is to be human in the midst of great deal of dehumanization.¹²⁸ Thus, as William Thompson says, an “excessively mundane deity fosters an excessively low view of humanity, and thus leads to human callousness and apathy.”¹²⁹

Finally, and importantly, as we said earlier the classical Christology elucidates the relationship between the Father and the Son but understates the relationship between the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the light of such a limitation in classical Christology, a study of the relationship between Christology and pneumatology becomes very significant. Karl Barth toward the end of his life said that theology, the first article and Christology the second article would be well understood through God the Holy Spirit.¹³⁰ In his view, the theology of the Holy Spirit sets a new future agenda for dogmatic theology.¹³¹ Similarly, the Russian Orthodox theologian Nikolav Berdayev considers pneumatology as “the last unexplored theological frontier.”¹³²

¹²⁷ Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology', p. 260.

¹²⁸ Havrilak, 'Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today', p. 135.

¹²⁹ William M. Thompson, *The Jesus Debate: A Survey and Synthesis* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), p. 331, cited by Havrilak, 'Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today', p. 131.

¹³⁰ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), p. 13, citing Karl Barth, *Schleiermacher: Auswahl mit einem Nachwort von Karl Barth*, ed. Heiz Bolli (Munich: Siebenstern-Raschencuch, 1968), p. 311.

¹³¹ Ralph Del Colle, 'Schleiermacher and Spirit Christology: Unexplored Horizons of the Christian Faith', *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 1 no. 3 (1999), 286-307, (pp. 286-287).

¹³² Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 13, citing Nikolav Berdayev, *Spirit and Reality* (London: G. Bles, 1964), p. 22.

The Holy Spirit is often spoken of as “faceless”, “shadowy”, “ghostly”, “anonymous”, the “unknown” or “half-known” God,¹³³ the “Cinderella of Western theology.”¹³⁴ The Spirit, the unknown third of the Trinity, shows only the face of the Father and the Son.

Contemporary theologians often bemoan the neglect of the Holy Spirit in theological reflection.¹³⁵ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen says that we must speak of “pneumatological deficit” in theology rather than the “oblivion of the Spirit.”¹³⁶ However, the nineteenth century saw a great revival of pneumatology.

1.4 A New Interest in Pneumatology

Systematic discussions about the Spirit are emerging today among theologians both in the West and in the two-thirds world. Kärkkäinen remarks, “In recent years, one of the most exciting developments in theology has been an unprecedented interest in the Holy Spirit.”¹³⁷ The Catholic theologian Elizabeth Dreyer says that there is a new interest in the spirituality of the Holy Spirit.

Renewed interest in the Holy Spirit is visible in at least three contexts: individual Christians who hunger for a deeper connection with God that is inclusive of all of life as well as the needs of the world; the church that seeks to renew itself through life-giving disciplines and a return to sources; and the formal inquiry of academic philosophy and theology. In effect, one can hear the petition, ‘Come Creator Spirit’ on many lips these days.¹³⁸

¹³³ These terms are listed in Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), p. 130. See also p. 294, n. 16.

¹³⁴ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1999), p. 1. Also, Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Oxford, U.K./Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994), p. 240.

¹³⁵ Refer to J. Patout Burns and Gerald M. Fagin, *The Holy Spirit, Message of the Fathers of the Church* (Willmington: Michael Glazier, 1984), p. 11. McDonnell, ‘A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?’ p. 191. Hendrikus Berkhof, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 10.

¹³⁶ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 17.

¹³⁷ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 11. See also Donald J. Gelpi, “The Theological Challenge of Charismatic Spirituality,” *Pneuma*, 14 no. 2 (1992), 185-197, (p. 185).

¹³⁸ Elizabeth A. Dreyer, “Resources for a Renewed Life in the Spirit and Pneumatology: Medieval Mystics and Saints,” in *Advent of the Spirit: Orientations in Pneumatology*, Conference Papers from a Symposium at Marquette University, 17-19 April 1998 (unpublished), p. 1, cited by Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 11.

Likewise, another Catholic theologian John R. Sachs says there is,

An incredible interest today in the Spirit and spirituality. People are paying attention to the spiritual dimension of their lives and often seem to be experiencing the Spirit in ways and places that often challenge traditional theologies and Church structures and sometimes have little connection with traditional religious practice. The Spirit is present and active beyond the official structures and ordained ministries of the Church.¹³⁹

Speaking about the pneumatological renaissance in theology, Kärkkäinen says there are two reasons that are decisively important for the resurgence of pneumatology.¹⁴⁰ The first is the influence of the Eastern Orthodox Churches with their emphasis on pneumatology in the World Council of Churches.

The doctrine of the Spirit has always played a more prominent role in Eastern Orthodox theology, with roots in the classical works of Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, and Basil the Great. According to many Orthodox theologians, the Eastern Church gives priority to pneumatology, and the Western to Christology, although both profess the same Trinitarian faith. The Eastern tradition pays more attention to the Holy Spirit both in the doctrine of salvation and in ecclesiology.¹⁴¹

The second reason is the rise of Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Kärkkäinen observes that “by the 1980s the Pentecostal–Charismatic phenomenon has grown to be the second largest Christian constituency after the Roman Catholic Church.”¹⁴²

Pentecostalism emerged in the twentieth century and rapidly grew worldwide.¹⁴³ The

¹³⁹ John R. Sachs, “Do Not Stifle the Spirit’: Karl Rahner, the Legacy of Vatican II, and Its Urgency for Theology Today,” *Catholic Theological Society Proceedings*, 51, (1996), p. 15, cited by Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 14.

¹⁴⁰ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 12, citing Bernd Jochen Hilberath, “Pneumatologie,” in *Handbuch der Dogmatik*, ed. Theodor Schneider et al., (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1992), 1:448-49.

¹⁴¹ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 12.

¹⁴² Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, ‘Pentecostal Missiology in Ecumenical Perspective: Contributions, Challenges, Controversies’, *International Review of Mission*, 88 no. 350 (1999), 207-225, (p. 207). Also, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, ‘One Hundred Years of Pentecostal Missions: A Report on the European Pentecostal/Charismatic Research Association’s 1999 Meeting’, *Mission Studies*, 17 no. 1-2 (2000), 207-216, (p. 207).

¹⁴³ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 87, citing “The Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements” in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), pp. 1-6. Pentecostalism is said to have its origin at Charles F. Parham’s Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas on January 1, 1901 where some students began speaking in unknown languages. This revival gained publicity by William J. Seymour, who preached the message of Pentecost at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles. His preaching led to an outbreak of speaking in tongues among the African-American people. This experience spread and within a few years several independent Pentecostal churches

emphasis on the Holy Spirit and spiritual life is the hallmark of Pentecostalism.¹⁴⁴ Alan H. Anderson describes non-Western forms of Pentecostalism.¹⁴⁵ Kärkkäinen observes that, “... the most rapid growth of Christian churches is taking place outside the West, and African Instituted Churches (AIC) and other non-traditional churches are heavily pneumatologically and charismatically loaded in their spirituality and theology.”¹⁴⁶ Further, the official Roman Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue, which began in 1972, still continues to take place on various issues.¹⁴⁷ The Pentecostal-Orthodox interactions and the developments within Pentecostal-Charismatic circles add significant theological reflections on the person and work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁸

The Charismatic movement began in the 1960s and 1970s when people in the mainline Protestant churches (Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists), Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches began to experience spiritual renewal and speak tongues. “It is a sign of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit”¹⁴⁹ remarks Nicholas Wolterstorff. These movements in the mainline churches made an impact on the lives of Christians and led to a realisation of the significance of the Holy Spirit in the theological

such as the Assembly of God, the United Pentecostal Church, and others arose. John Warren Morris, 'The Charismatic Movement: An Orthodox Evaluation', *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 28 no. 2 (1983), 103-134, (pp. 107-108). Gary B. McGee observes “the first Indian ‘Pentecost’ preceded that in America by forty years.” Gary B. McGee, 'Pentecostal Phenomena and Revivals in India: Implications for Indigenous Church Leadership', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 20 (1996), 112-118, (p. 114). See also Alan H. Anderson, 'Pentecostalism in East Asia: Indigenous Oriental Christianity?' *Pneuma*, 22 no. 1 (2000), 115-132, (p. 116).

¹⁴⁴ Sang-Hwan Lee, 'The Relevance of St. Basil's Pneumatology to Modern Pentecostalism [1]', <<http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/lee.html>> [accessed 03 Nov 2002].

¹⁴⁵ See Anderson, 'Pentecostalism in East Asia', pp. 115-132

¹⁴⁶ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, pp. 147-148.

¹⁴⁷ See Walter J. Hollenweger, 'Roman Catholics and Pentecostals in Dialogue', *Ecumenical Review*, 51 no. 2 (1999), 147-159. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 'Proselytism and Church Relations', *Ecumenical Review*, 52 no. 3 (2000), 379-390, (p. 380). Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "'Ecumenism in Wonderland": Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue on Mission and Proselytism', *International Review of Mission*, 89 no. 355 (2000), 556-567, (p. 556). Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 'Pentecostal Missiology in Ecumenical Perspective', *International Review of Mission*, 88 no. 350 (1999), 207-225, (pp. 215-216).

¹⁴⁸ Edmund J. Rybarczyk, 'Spiritualities Old and New: Similarities between Eastern Orthodoxy & Classical Pentecostalism', *Pneuma*, 24 (2002), 7-25.

¹⁴⁹ Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflections on the Claim that God Speaks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.7. See also Edward D. O'Connor, C.S.C. *Charismatic Renewal* (London: SPCK, 1978), p. 3.

agenda.¹⁵⁰ C. Peter Wagner identifies yet another phenomenon which he calls 'the third wave of the Holy Spirit.'¹⁵¹ Third Wave charismatics emphasize prophetic ministry, healing, powers and principalities; signs and wonder.

On the Roman Catholic side, pneumatological interest began as early as 1825. J. Adams Möhler in his *Unity in the Church or the principle of Catholicism* (1825) put forward the idea that the Church is the continued incarnation and thus argued for a Spirit-centered ecclesiology.¹⁵² Also M. J. Scheeben (d. 1888) described the church as a "kind of incarnation of the Holy Spirit."¹⁵³ In 1897, the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII *Divinum illud munus* (On the Holy Ghost) showed the importance given to the Holy Spirit in the Roman Catholic Church. A second papal encyclical, *Mystici corporis* of Pope Pius XII in 1943, spoke about the role of the Holy Spirit in Christology and ecclesiology.¹⁵⁴

The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) turned its attention to pneumatology and it was called by Pope John XXIII, "universally attested as a new work of the Spirit."¹⁵⁵ The writings of Yves Congar¹⁵⁶, Karl Rahner, Heribert Mühlen, and others contribute to the fuller recovery of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit before and after Vatican II.¹⁵⁷ Vatican II itself, speaking of the charisms within the Church, gave a great deal of impetus to the

¹⁵⁰ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 12, citing Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994), p. 240.

¹⁵¹ C. Peter Wagner, *The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit*, (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1988), cited by Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), p. 156.

¹⁵² Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 73.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Donald L. Gelpi, 'The Theological Challenge of Charismatic Spirituality', *Pneuma*, 14 no. 2 (1992), 185-197, (p. 185).

¹⁵⁵ Del Colle Ralph, 'The Pursuit of Holiness: A Roman Catholic–Pentecostal Dialogue', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 37 no. 3-4 (2000), 301-320, (p. 313).

¹⁵⁶ Joseph Fameree gives a sketch of Congar's Orthodox influences, his thought and a survey of his writings prior to Vatican II. Joseph Fameree, 'Orthodox Influence on the Roman Catholic Theologian Yves Congar, O.P. : A Sketch', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 39 no. 4 (1995), 409-416.

¹⁵⁷ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 74.

Catholic Charismatic movement.¹⁵⁸ The Catholic Charismatic renewal began in 1967 and this “renewal has marked a new stage in Catholic receptivity to the innovative movements of the Spirit.”¹⁵⁹ Donald L. Gelpi remarks that the Catholic Charismatic Renewal has become “an international movement in Christian spirituality.”¹⁶⁰ Also the Roman Catholic Church prepared to deepen her understanding of the Holy Spirit by declaring the year 1998 as the year of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶¹

In the North American context, Ralph Del Colle points out that “the spirituality of Isaac Hecker (the founder of the Paulist Fathers) and the devotion to the Holy Spirit of John Joseph Keane, Thomas Scott Preston, Otto Zardetti, Thomas F. Hopkins, and Joseph McSorley during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries”¹⁶² contributed to the pneumatological renaissance.

On the Orthodox side, theologians such as Vladimir Lossky, Nikos Nissiotis, Boris Bobrinskoy, Paul Evdokimov and John D. Zizioulas, with their rich pneumatology speak about pneumatological soteriology, pneumatological ecclesiology and pneumatological Christology.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ Gelpi, 'The Theological Challenge of Charismatic Spirituality', p. 186.

¹⁵⁹ Ralph, 'The Pursuit of Holiness: A Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue', pp. 313-314.

¹⁶⁰ Gelpi, 'The Theological Challenge of Charismatic Spirituality', p. 185.

¹⁶¹ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 12, citing Pope John Paul II, *Celebrate 2000! Reflections on the Holy Spirit: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), chapter 3.

¹⁶² Ralph, 'The Pursuit of Holiness: A Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue', p. 313, citing Joseph P. Chinnici, ed., *Devotion to the Holy Spirit in American Catholicism* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985).

¹⁶³ John Breck, 'The Two Hands of God' Christ and the Spirit in Orthodox Theology', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 40 no. 4 (1996), 231-246, (p. 233).

In the Ecumenical Movement, pneumatological reflection did not gain momentum until the 1980s¹⁶⁴ but now there is a great deal of discussion.¹⁶⁵ The General Assembly of the World Council of Churches which met at Canberra, Australia, in 1991, had a pneumatological theme, 'Come Holy Spirit, Renew the Creation.' This assembly "focused theological reflection on various aspects of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in relation to the church, ecumenism, and creation."¹⁶⁶ In 1993 the Faith and Order meeting of the WCC held at Santiago de Compostela, Spain, discussed the theological relationship between the Holy Spirit and the communion of the Church. Again, in 1997, the General Assembly of the WCC held at Harare, Zimbabwe discussed various topics on pneumatology. A Joint Working Group between Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians and the WCC was founded and "one of the purposes of this team is to assess the meaning of the Pneumatological renaissance for the Christian church worldwide."¹⁶⁷

These signs of the Spirit or the pneumatological renaissance led theologians to consider the Spirit as central to theological reflection and to recover the pneumatic paradigm in contextual theologies.¹⁶⁸ We have now Process pneumatology, Feminist pneumatology,

¹⁶⁴ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, pp. 18-19, citing Konard Raiser, "The Holy Spirit in Modern Ecumenical Thought," *The Ecumenical Review* 41 no. 3 (1989), p. 375.

¹⁶⁵ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, pp. 18-19.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

¹⁶⁷ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 13.

¹⁶⁸ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, pp. 20-22, provides us with a survey of contemporary pneumatological works: Jürgen Moltmann's *Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1999) presents a holistic pneumatology which would include earth and body in pneumatological reflection. Michael Welker's *God the Spirit* trans. John F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994) presents a biblical theology of the Spirit. Clark Pinnock's *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Soners Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996) sees many aspects of theology from a pneumatological perspective. Joseph Comblin's *The Holy Spirit and Liberation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1989) sees Spirit's work from the perspective of liberation. Elizabeth Johnson's *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992) brings out women's perspective to the understanding of the doctrine of God and the Spirit. Blair Reynolds' *Toward a Process Pneumatology* (London: Associated University Presses, 1990) sees the common features between Process theology and the Christian Spiritualities with mystical orientation. Geiko Mueller-Fahernholz's *God's Spirit: Transforming a World in Crisis* (New York: Continuum, 1995) sees the relevance of the Holy Spirit to politics. Miroslav Volf in his *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) sees the relevance of the Holy Spirit to work. Mark Wallace's *Fragments of the Spirit: Nature, Violence, and the Renewal of Creation* (New York: Continuum, 1996) takes a pneumatological approach to creation and environmental issues. To

Liberation pneumatology, Ecological and Green pneumatologies.¹⁶⁹ Also, the recent renewal of interest in the doctrine of the Trinity¹⁷⁰ has contributed to the pneumatological revival. Kilian McDonnell comments, "The renewal of interest in Trinitarian theology in any age would bring with it a new awareness of the Spirit."¹⁷¹

this list, we must also add Pannenberg's *Systematic Theology* since for him Spirit is central to understanding every other doctrine. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, trans. by Geoffrey W Bromiley 3 vols (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991-98).

¹⁶⁹ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, pp. 147-148, explains different pneumatologies: "Process pneumatology builds on the foundation of process philosophy and theology and attempts to understand the Spirit in dynamic, evolving, mystical terms. Liberation theology, which evolved in the womb of the poor of Latin America but soon spread to other continents as well, approaches the Spirit from the questions of freedom and survival. Ecological or green pneumatologies purport to address the impending crises of the future of creation—pollution, the depletion of natural resources, and ecological disaster—by utilizing pneumatological insights and resources. Feminist pneumatologies attempt to interpret the Spirit experience from the perspective of women and find feminine counterparts for addressing the deity and the divine Spirit."

¹⁷⁰ McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' p. 192. David Cunningham observes that at the close of the eighteenth century the belief in the doctrine of the Trinity was undermined or even considered as irrational. But some of the twentieth century theologians "reaffirmed the centrality of the doctrine of the Trinity" (Karl Barth, Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Vladimir Lossky, Eberhard Jungel, Walter Kasper, Jürgen Moltmann, and John D. Zizioulas). Theologians like Leonardo Boff, Elizabeth Johnson, and Catherine Mowry LaCugna are now exploring the significance of the "cultural, ethical and ecumenical dimensions of the doctrine of Trinity." David S. Cunningham, *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology, Challenges in Contemporary Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), p. ix. There are many reasons for the recent revival of the Trinity. For many theologians the Trinity provides a new paradigm to combat the deistic Unitarian God who still seems to dominate different aspects of religion and society. For example, Moltmann's construal of social Trinitarianism is in response to "monotheistic monarchianism" which gives rise to "political monotheism" and "clerical monotheist." See Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* (London: SCM, 1981), p. 192ff. Also, the Orthodox voice in the ecumenical movement is responsible for the Trinitarian revival. The *filioque* issue warrants a fresh reflection of the doctrine of the Trinity. The contemporary restatements of the doctrine of the Trinity either by directly addressing the *filioque* issue or as part of the construal give some contours for conceiving the relationship between Christology and pneumatology. Colin Gunton attempts to interpret the doctrine of creation from Christological and pneumatological points of view and thus gives a Trinitarian basis for the doctrine of creation. See Colin E. Gunton, *The Triune Creator: A Historical and Systematic Study* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998). Alan J. Torrance conceives human sociality in the light of inner Trinitarian relationships. See Alan J. Torrance, *Persons in Communion: An Essay on Trinitarian Description and Human Participation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996). Thomas F. Torrance reinterprets the *monarchia* of God as that which concerns not merely the Father but all the three persons. See Thomas F. Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God: One Being Three Persons* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996). Patrick Sherry sees the relevance of the Trinity to aesthetics particularly with pneumatic orientation. He also acknowledges that Jonathan Edwards and Urs von Balthasar have undertaken such an approach. See Patrick Sherry, *Spirit and Beauty: An Introduction to Theological Aesthetics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). All these theologians and many others who are not mentioned here show the ultimate importance of the doctrine for the contemporary theological inquiry. The hallmark of the renewal of interest in the Trinity among contemporary theologians is that the Trinity is not treated as an isolated doctrine but as a "methodological principle for the whole systematic agenda." Alistair McFadyen, 'The Trinity and Human Individuality: The Condition for Relevance', *Theology*, xciv no. 763 (1992), 10-18, (p. 10). See also, for contemporary reflections on the Trinity, John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). This in turn gives a new impetus and insightful resources to develop Spirit Christology.

¹⁷¹ McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' p. 192.

1.5 Spirit Christology

The recent renaissance of Spirit Christology can be situated in this pneumatological renaissance. There are various attempts to reflect on the person and work of Christ from a pneumatological perspective. Herald D. Hunter says that the contribution of Pentecostal-charismatic movement is in the linking of Christology and pneumatology.¹⁷² Amos Yong draws attention to the Catholic charismatics' attempt to see the conjunction of the Word and the Spirit.¹⁷³ There are many contemporary Roman Catholic theologians attempting to articulate the dogmatic relationship between Christology and pneumatology.¹⁷⁴ Gerald T. Sheppard sees the *filioque* as a common ground between Pentecostalism and Eastern Orthodoxy.¹⁷⁵ An essay on Christological pneumatology was released as part of the series of documents to prepare members for the Seventh Assembly of the WCC, which had a pneumatological focus as we have mentioned above.¹⁷⁶

Spirit Christology has emerged as a new Christological construct.¹⁷⁷ Philip J. Rosato observes that there are at least two important reasons for this resurgence of Spirit Christology:

¹⁷² Harold D. Hunter, 'The Resurgence of Spirit Christology', <http://www.fullnet.net/np/archives/writings/epta.html> [accessed 10 Oct 2004].

¹⁷³ Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s)*, p. 174, referring to D. Frank Macchia, 'Tongues as a Sign: Towards a Sacramental Understanding of Pentecostal Experience', *Pneuma*, 15 (1993), 61-76.

¹⁷⁴ For example, see McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology'.

¹⁷⁵ Hunter, 'The Resurgence of Spirit Christology'.

¹⁷⁶ Hunter, 'The Resurgence of Spirit Christology'.

¹⁷⁷ These are some of the recent writings on Spirit Christology: James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SCM, 1975). Dunn, *Christology in the Making* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980). Olaf Hansen, "Spirit Christology: A Way out of Our Dilemma?" in *The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church*, ed. P. Opsahl (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1978), pp.172-203. Norman Hook, "A Spirit Christology," *Theology* 75, 1972, 226-32. Harold Hunter, "Spirit Christology: Dilemma and Promise," *Heythrop Journal* 24, 1983, pp. 127-40, 266-77. Norman Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century: A Spirit Christology* (London: Lutterworth P, 1968). G. W. H. Lampe, "The Holy Spirit and the Person of Christ," in *Christ, Faith and History*, eds. S. W. Sykes and J. P. Clayton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 111-30. Lampe, *God as Spirit* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977). Paul W. Newman, *A Spirit Christology: Recovering the Biblical Paradigm of Christian Faith* (Lanham, Maryland: Univ. Press of America, 1987). Philip J. Rosato, "Spirit Christology: Ambiguity and Promise," *Theological Studies* 38, 1977, 423-49. Peter C. Hodgson, *Winds of the Spirit: A Constructive Christian Theology* (London: SCM, 1994). Yves M. J. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 3 vols. trans. by David Smith (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983). Yves M. J. Congar, *The Word and the*

The first is that Christian theologians engaged in a multifaceted dialogue with other cultures and ideologies, are groping for an effectual Christological paradigm which is both identical with their tradition and relevant to the empirical, socially critical, and future-oriented outlook of modern man. The second is that the same theologians are being challenged by the lively spirituality of the charismatic renewal to reflect on Jesus' own relationship to the Holy Spirit.¹⁷⁸

Alasdair Heron says, "In order to speak of Jesus we have to speak of the activity of the Spirit in him."¹⁷⁹ Rosato says "To understand Jesus fully, one must appreciate his unique union with God's own principle of communicating Himself to man in history, that is, to the Spirit."¹⁸⁰ Paul Newman says, "When Jesus' identity is interpreted in terms of the presence of God's spirit in him, the theology of God's Spirit becomes a major component in Christology."¹⁸¹ They show that the New Testament not only speaks of *Logos* Christology but also of Spirit Christology, "The intention of the Synoptics is to present the life of Jesus as one wholly possessed and directed by the Spirit."¹⁸² Further, "Christologies based on the incarnate Logos model may be appropriate explanations of the significance of Jesus; our appreciation of the significance of Jesus for salvation, however, requires the added awareness of Jesus' experience of the Spirit."¹⁸³

They claim that the Synoptics, the proto-Pauline epistles, and even the fourth Gospel present us with a Spirit Christology, although it cannot be stated that Spirit Christology is central to the New Testament. However, it can be stated that *Logos* Christology is

Spirit, trans. by David Smith (London: Chapman, 1986). Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology', *Theological Studies*, 53 (1992), 257-287.

¹⁷⁸ Philip J. Rosato, 'Spirit Christology: Ambiguity and Promise', *Theological Studies*, 38 (1977), 423-449. See also Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology'.

¹⁷⁹ Heron, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 126.

¹⁸⁰ Rosato, 'Spirit Christology', p. 439.

¹⁸¹ Paul W. Newman, *A Spirit Christology: Recovering the Biblical Paradigm of Christian Faith* (Lanham, New York: University Press of America, 1987), p. xiv.

¹⁸² George Stuart Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (London: SCM, 1957), p. 19.

¹⁸³ Barbara Finan, 'The Holy Spirit: An Issue in Theology', *Spirituality Today*, 38 (1986), 9-18, (p. 13).

primarily centred only in the prologue to the fourth Gospel.¹⁸⁴ Jesus is spoken of as the anointed one, the bearer of the Spirit, the one who was led by the Spirit and so on. In post-Biblical theology, *Logos* Christology became central thereby marginalising Spirit Christology. “Both pneumatologists and christologists have become increasingly conscious of the need to develop Christologies which take this mutuality more seriously.”¹⁸⁵ It is now thought that the Christ-event can be explained using the concept of either *Logos* or the concept of God as Spirit.¹⁸⁶ In fact, the Spirit could add new dimensions to Christology since the Spirit has “different dynamics than Word/Dabar/Logos...”¹⁸⁷

Spirit Christology is variously defined. It is a Spirit-centred Christology; it is a Christology according to the Holy Spirit. It is a Christology seen from the perspective of the Holy Spirit; it is the study of the role of the Holy Spirit in the incarnation, baptism and in the paschal mystery. It indicates the “pneumatological dimension of the Christ-event.”¹⁸⁸ Kasper terms it a “pneumatologically orientated Christology” since the “mediation between God and man in Jesus Christ can be understood theologically only as an event ‘in the Holy Spirit.’”¹⁸⁹ Ralph Del Colle calls it “Spirit-orientated or pneumatologically-determined christology.”¹⁹⁰ According to him it is an area of study of the

convergence between Christology and pneumatology. Depending on the theologian, this convergence may emerge in any number of places but the usual candidates include the theology of grace, the doctrine of sanctification,

¹⁸⁴ Piet J. A. M. Schoonenberg, 'Spirit Christology and Logos Christology', *Bijdragen*, 38 (1977), 350-375, (p. 353). Also, James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (London: SCM, 1980), p. 241, cited by Runia, *The Present-Day Christological Debate*, p. 89.

¹⁸⁵ Finan, 'The Holy Spirit: An Issue in Theology', p. 13.

¹⁸⁶ Roger Haight, 'Jesus and World Religions', *Modern Theology*, 12 no. 3 (1996), 321-344, (p. 339).

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ Joseph H. P. Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', *Gregorianum*, 73 (1992), 57-95, (p. 59).

¹⁸⁹ Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 249.

¹⁹⁰ Del Colle, 'Schleiermacher and Spirit Christology', p. 288.

ecclesiology, sacramental theology, and even within Christology itself. This latter possibility often takes the form of an explicitly designated Spirit Christology or what some prefer to label as a Spirit-orientated or pneumatologically-determined Christology.¹⁹¹

According to Roger Haight, “Spirit Christology is one that ‘explains’ how God is present and active in Jesus, and thus Jesus’ divinity, by using the biblical symbol of God as Spirit, and not the symbol Logos.”¹⁹²

1.6 The Relevance of Spirit Christology to the Indian Context

This theological endeavour of bringing in the pneumatological dimension in Christology not only enriches systematic theology but is also very much relevant to the Indian context. Michael Amaladoss thinks that a “clear definition of Chalcedon is not quite intelligible in India. Some of those terms cannot even be translated into Indian languages.”¹⁹³ However, there have been attempts to interpret classical *Logos* Christology using the Sanskrit term, *Cit*. But Indian translations or recasting of *Logos* Christology for the Indian context in Hindu terminologies also fall short, with the same limitations as classical *Logos* Christology.

Indian interpretations of *Logos* Christology, like the classical *Logos* Christology, start from the divinity of Christ and emphasise Jesus as the eternal *Logos*. The Indian Christian theologian Keshava Chandra Sen interprets Christ as *Cit*, the *Logos* who is coeternal with the Father. In time, this eternal *Logos* takes flesh and is born. The word *Cit* (consciousness or intelligence) is taken to be the equivalent of the *Logos*.¹⁹⁴ The Indian

¹⁹¹ Del Colle, 'Schleiermacher and Spirit Christology', p. 288.

¹⁹² Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology', p. 257.

¹⁹³ Michael Amaladoss, 'Speaking of Jesus in India Today', *Theology Digest*, 46 no. 1 (1999), 33-38, (p. 34).

¹⁹⁴ Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India*, p. 152.

interpretations of *Logos* fall into the same difficulty of undermining the historicity of Jesus.

This is very clear in Brahmabandav Upādhyāya's interpretation of the *Logos* concept using term *Cit*. He refers to Christ as *Cit*, the transcendent image of God. He writes,

The transcendent Image of Brahman,
Blossomed and mirrored in the full-to-overflowing
Eternal Intelligence—
Victory to God, the God-Man.

Child of the pure Virgin,
Guide to the Universe, infinite in Being
Yet beauteous with relations,
Victory to God, the God-Man.

Ornament of the Assembly
Of saints and sages, Destroyer of fear, Chastiser
Of the Spirit of Evil, —
Victory to God, the God-Man.

Dispeller of weakness
Of soul and body, pouring out life for others,
Whose deeds are holy,
Victory to God, the God-Man.

Priest and Offerer
Of his own soul in agony, whose Life is Sacrifice,
Victory to God, the God-Man.

Tender, beloved,
Soothe of the human heart, Ointment of the eyes,
Vanquisher of fierce death, —
*Victory to God, the God-Man.*¹⁹⁵

Upādhyāya's interpretation of Christ as *Cit* firmly establishes Christ's ontological status.

He is the image of the transcendent God, the eternal intelligence. He is the infinite being.

Christ's divinity is stated very clearly but his humanity does not find an adequate emphasis. Indian interpretations of *Logos* Christology focus on the eternal status of Christ at the expense of Jesus' humanity. In India, we need a Christology that is free from the

¹⁹⁵ R. H. S. Boyd, *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology* (New Delhi: ISPCK, 1989), pp. 77-78.

heresies of subordinationism, docetism, dualism, elitism and reductionism, and that is also relevant and meaningful to various religious traditions.

Ewert Cousins explains the difficulty of using *Logos* Christology in an Eastern context.

He writes,

To universalize through Logos Christology has been fruitful for Western culture since in the Graeco-Roman-Christian West both religion and general culture are based on logos—as word and thought. Furthermore, Christianity could relate itself to Judaism and differentiate itself from Islam through its doctrine of Christ as Word of the Father since both Judaism and Islam are founded on God's word revealed to man. But Christianity faces a different situation when it confronts the great religions of the East, in anything more than an imperialistic way. For these religions do not have the same grounding in logos as western culture or Judaism and Islam. When the Christian dialogues with Buddhists and Hindus, he is confronted with new questions that did not arise at the time of Christianity's emergence out of Judaism, or its encounter with the Greek world in the second and third centuries, with Islam in the middle Ages, with the American Indians in the age of exploration or with secular Western culture at the present time. In confronting the east, the Christian will have to ask himself certain radical questions. He will have to examine whether Christology, even in its universalized form, is the most viable bridge between West and East.¹⁹⁶

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, the noted Indian philosopher says “India lives centrally in the Spirit ...,”¹⁹⁷ yearning to listen to the internal voice of Supreme Life-force. Hindu theology and, to be precise, the Upaniṣadic tradition is much oriented towards ‘spirituality’ ‘interiority’ ‘self-realization’ and a deep yearning to move from the incomplete to the complete (*pūrnam*). The following Upaniṣadic prayer found in Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3:8 describes the spiritual longing of the Hindus.

Asato ma sad gamaya (from unreal lead me to real)
 Tamaso ma jyotir gamaya (from darkness lead me to light)
 Mṛtyor ma amṛtam gamaya (from death lead me to immortality)

¹⁹⁶ Ewert Cousins, 'The Trinity and World Religions', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 7 no. 3 (1970), 476-498, (p. 478)..

¹⁹⁷ John B. Chethimattam, *Patterns of Indian Thought* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1971), p. 7, citing Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, *The Renaissance in India*, 3rd edn (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House, 1946), pp. 44-6.

It is to the Spirit that most *Upaniṣadic* texts point. A. C. Bouquet says "...the insistence upon the universal necessity of developing the interior life is still India's strongest contribution to the sum-total of the world's religion..."¹⁹⁸ In this theological context Spirit Christology seems much more promising than classical Christology with its focus on the incarnate Word that confines and even determines the theological discussion to the two-nature theory. Further, in the Hindu context the two-nature model is misleading since Christ would be understood as one of the *avatārs* (incarnations) of *para-Brahman*, which is beyond all *namā* (name) and *rupā* (form). Hence, Spirit Christology will be meaningful in relating the Christ-event to the people who wish to see Jesus from within Hindu theological tradition.

This is clear in T. E. Slater's comment that "The God whom India seeks and must find is a God who is Eternal and Unchangeable, and who abides in the heart, whose true home is the inmost soul of man."¹⁹⁹ William Miller considered India's ideal to be her way of seeing the divine "not merely over all but in all."²⁰⁰ Chenchiah says "The 'Holy Spirit' – the doctrine and personality – if my instincts are sound, will play a decisive role in Indian theology. They may receive new interpretation and become the corner-stone of Indian Christian theology."²⁰¹ Therefore, in an Indian context the understanding of the Holy Spirit as indweller and inspirer is a relevant theme to explore. Further, Christology in India must relate not only to the religio-cultural elements and deeper spiritual aspirations of the people of India but also to the debilitating poverty, dehumanizing caste and sexual discriminations. Hence, the presumption here is that the Spirit Christology would be

¹⁹⁸ A. C. Bouquet, *Hinduism* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1966), p. 138.

¹⁹⁹ Kaj Baago, *Pioneers of Indigenous Christianity* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1969), p. 170.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

²⁰¹ P. Chenchiah, 'Appendix', in *Rethinking Christianity in India*, ed. by G. V. Job et al (Madras: A. N. Sudarisanam, 1938), pp. 1-54, (pp. 10-11).

helpful in meeting the religious quests of the people and the contemporary challenges of Indian society.

Spirit Christology is not yet an emerging paradigm in Indian Christian theology. However, it must be acknowledged there have been a few proponents of the Spiritual approach such as Prof. O. Lacombe, J-A Cuttat, Jules Monchanin, Swami Abhishiktānanda, Pandippedi Chenchiah and K. Klostermaier. Among contemporary theologians, Stanley J. Samartha, Vandana Mathaji, Raymond Panikkar and Samuel Rayan have contributed towards Indian understanding of the Holy Spirit. Rayan has even spoken on Spirit Christology briefly from a liberation perspective.²⁰² Although Samartha has not developed a pneumatological Christology for India, in his book *Between Two Cultures*²⁰³ suggests that pneumatological Christology is a viable option for a theocentric Christology in India. Kirsteen Kim, a British theologian and missiologist, has conducted an elaborate study of the Pneumatologies of Samartha, Sister Vandana and Rayan. Her book, entitled *Mission in the Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Indian Christian Theologies*²⁰⁴, is a recent work on Indian Pneumatology. Hence, there have been some attempts by Indian and non-Indian theologians to bring in the pneumatological dimension in theology.

We have chosen the two twentieth century Indian theologians Pandipeddi Chenchiah (1886–1959) and Swami Abhishiktānanda (Dom Henri Le Saux) (1910–1973) for our study. The rationale for choosing these theologians is firstly that, just as the early church theologians interacted with the Greek philosophical tradition, these theologians attempt to interpret Christ in interaction with philosophical Hinduism. Chenchiah, a convert from

²⁰² For example, see Samuel Rayan, *Breath of Fire* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1979) especially pp. 7-8, 31-35.

²⁰³ Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996.

²⁰⁴ Delhi: ISPCK, 2003.

Hinduism, theologizes using Sri Aurobindo's philosophical system. Swami

Abhishiktānanda, a French monk and a missionary to India who founded the *Saccidānanda āshram* at Tiruchirapalli in south India, theologizes within the *advaita* philosophical tradition.

Secondly, they take the reality of Indian Christians' affinity with Hindu Spirituality seriously. According to Abhishiktānanda, since the Church in India is by and large situated in the context of Hindu spiritual tradition, Indian Christians have affinity with Hindu religious experience.²⁰⁵ Thirdly, these theologians think that Hindu spirituality can enhance the Christian understanding of Christ. In Chenchiah's view, a recovery of the Hindu heritage might enrich the church and India can contribute to the spiritual experience of Christendom. He writes,

... It might send the Indian Christian on the new venture of rediscovering some hidden aspect of our Lord's life of great value to the world. Paul gave to the Roman world the Jesus he knew. The Roman World so purged the Pauline vision that he saw in Jesus the Christ eternal. St John passed on to the Greeks the Jesus of his memory. Greece gave back to John the conception of Logos incarnated in Jesus. May it not be that the Indian Church's desire to flow into Hinduism as India's heritage and heredity is the very background from which she is called upon to see Jesus, and, thus seeing, uncover a new aspect of his inexhaustible life? ...²⁰⁶

Fourthly, these theologians attempt to interpret the doctrine of the Trinity, Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Indian context using Hindu philosophical traditions. These interpretations in interaction with the Spirit Christologies developed in the West would enable us to highlight the dimensions of Christology that classical Christology missed and would enable us to find trajectories to develop a Spirit Christology for Indian Christians.

²⁰⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda: A Christian Approach to Advaitic Experience*, 1974, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), p. xiv.

²⁰⁶ D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), citing Chenchiah, "Christianity and Hinduism," *Pamphlet*, 1928, p. 2.

1.7 Objectives, Scope and Limits of the Study

This study seeks to enrich both Western Christological thinking and Indian Christology by exploring the pneumatic dimension of Christology. To this end, it offers a critical investigation of Spirit Christologies, and thereby endeavours to make Christology more meaningful to Indian Christians. By doing so, the study also aims to make Christology appealing to a Hindu audience who are interested in seeing Christ through a Hindu theological lens.

As the objectives of this study shows, the scope of this research is to enrich both Western Christological reflection as well as Indian Christology. This can happen when both Indian and Western Christological reflections on Christ and Spirit are brought into a creative interaction. We surmise that such an interaction might contribute to global conversation.

Concerning the resources used to enrich Indian Christology it must be stated that the Indian thinkers we have selected for this study depend on the Upaniṣadic tradition for their theologising. This might suggest that the scope of this research is limited to the elite, high caste sector of Indian/Hindu society.²⁰⁷ This study is undertaken knowing full well the charges and criticisms against the Brahminical tradition that it is associated with the discrimination and oppression of the people who stand on the low rung of the hierarchical ladder or nowhere in the caste system and who are considered as dalits²⁰⁸ or outcastes.

²⁰⁷ Hindu social system is based on the four caste categories namely Brahmins (priestly class), Kshatriyas (ruler class), Vaishyas (traders and merchant class) and Shudras (serving class).

²⁰⁸ Dalits are the people who are alienated from the Hindu social-religious system. They are considered as untouchables. The term 'dalit' comes from the root word 'dal' which literally means, "to break' to 'rend asunder' or 'to oppress.'" Sathianathan Clarke, 'Redoing Indian Theology: Reflections from a Rural Parish', *Bangalore Theological Forum*, xviii no. 2-3 (1986), 125-136, (pp. 128-130, 132).

Dalit theologians today discuss the religio-cultural problem of dalits, the experience of dalits within the Hindu fold, their struggle for liberation and for a fuller humanity.²⁰⁹ The question of Christian dalits and their situation in the Christian community also gives rise to serious discussion.²¹⁰ There has also been some attempt to bring to the fore the dalit and folk religions.²¹¹ Tribal theologians consider the tribal religion and culture, particularly the holistic view of reality, that is, the interconnectedness between God (Spirit), human and the cosmos, as resources for doing theology in the tribal context.²¹² However, a creative use of indigenous resources in the study of the relationship between Christology and pneumatology is only now emerging.

Hence, it must be acknowledged that "Indian spiritualities are many and various and include Dravidian, folk and tribal/local forms alongside the 'elitist' traditions."²¹³ This aspect of plurality in Indian tradition is a great asset to Indian Christian theological reflection. Although the scope of this study falls largely within the Upaniṣadic tradition, it must be stated that such an endeavour is not without an objective of bringing out the liberative elements within this tradition to confront the evil from within.

²⁰⁹ See K. C. Abraham, 'Dalit Theology: Some Tasks Ahead', *Bangalore Theological Forum*, 29 no.1 (1997), 36-47. Abraham A. M. Ayrookuzhiel, 'Dalit Liberation: Some Reflections on their Ideological Predicament', *Religion and Society*, 35 no. 2 (1988), 47-52.

²¹⁰ James Massey, 'Christian Dalits: A Historical Perspective', *Journal of Dharma*, 16 (1991), 44-60. James Massey, 'Christian Dalits in India: An Analysis', *Religion and Society*, 37 no. 3 (1990), 40-53. James Massey, 'The Role of the Churches in the Whole Dalit Issue', *Religion and Society*, 41 no. 1 (1994), 44-50.

²¹¹ Gnana Robinson, ed., *Religions of the Marginalised: Towards the Phenomenology and the Methodology of the Study* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1998). Sathianathan Clarke, *Dalits and Christianity: Subaltern Religion and Liberation Theology in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

²¹² See A. Wati Longchar, *An Exploration of Tribal Theology* (Assam: Barkaraki, 1997). K. Thanzuava, *Theology of Community: Tribal Theology in the Making* (Bangalore: Asian Traditing corporation, 2004). C. Larka, 'Christianity and Tribal Identity', *Religion and Society*, 36 No.2 (1989), 30-39. Nirmal Minz, 'Religion and Culture as Power in the Context of Tribal Aspirations in India', *Religion and Society*, 33 no. 2 (1986), 45-54. Nirmal Minz, 'Meaning of Tribal Consciousness', *Religion and Society*, 34 no. 2 (1989), 12-23.

²¹³ Kirsteen Kim, *Mission in the Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Indian Christian Theologies* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2003), p. 228.

In this regard, it is worth noticing the comments of two Indian theologians who defend such a move in theologising. For instance, Vandana Mataji, a well known Indian theologian, thinks that the belief in the Eternal God, the way of love and the unity in the depth of Hindu Brahminical tradition might serve as an anchor to enlighten even the oppressive system within the Hindu community and see the evils within. Like Vandana, Samartha thinks that evil is found in every religious system and a theologian's task is to confront the evil and bring out the liberative aspects in each tradition.²¹⁴ Hence, our study, keeping this focus intact, follows such precedence that has already been set in Indian theological reflection.

1.8 Methodology

This study is critical and constructive. Two moves are made. First, the study critically analyses the different Spirit Christologies as they have emerged in Western theology. Likewise, it interrogates the two Indian theologians' interpretations of Christ and the Spirit. Then an effort is made towards bringing an interaction between the insights of the Indian theologians with the strengths of Spirit Christology and the issues in Spirit Christology. Second, these findings are then employed in an interaction with some Hindu concepts of Spirit in order to develop constructively²¹⁵ a Spirit Christology in the Indian context.

²¹⁴ Kirsteen Kim, *Mission in the Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Indian Christian Theologies* (Delhi: ISPCCK, 2003), p. 213.

²¹⁵ Here 'constructive' indicates re-working traditional Christian resources for a different context. It is a positive engagement, culturally situated, yet, indebted to, and seeking to renew, Christian tradition.

1.9 The Structure of the Study

This study has three parts. The first part analyses the different approaches to Spirit Christology in the West and concludes by highlighting the merits and limitations of Spirit Christology. The second part deals with the above said Indian theologians' interpretations of the relationship between Spirit and Christ and this part concludes by bringing these theologians in interaction with the insights gained from the Western approaches to Spirit Christology. The third part takes the interaction further and attempts to use terminologies such as *ātman*, *antaryāmin*, *śakti* and *ānanda* to give shape to Indian Spirit Christology. The original contribution of this work lies in drawing insights from different approaches and theological content both of the Western Spirit Christologies and Indian theologies to suggest contours of a Spirit Christology in the Indian context.

This is one attempt to express the mystery of incarnation in the Indian context. This is provisional. In the end we must say that the mystery, of incarnation that is expressed in paradox remains a mystery for it transcends all human categories.

Chapter Two

Spirit Christologies

2.1 Introduction

It can be stated that the recent resurgence of Spirit Christology in the West adds a new dimension to Christology since Christological reflection is incomplete without reflecting upon pneumatology and *vice versa*. However, Spirit Christology is not an entirely a new approach in Christology. It can be traced right back to the pre-Chalcedonian era.¹ Hence, this is an old as well as a new subject for discussion. In this chapter, we will describe very briefly different Spirit Christologies in both the pre-Chalcedonian era and contemporary West. The objective in this chapter is to highlight the features of various Spirit Christologies, their strengths and limitations.

2.2 The Spirit and Christ in Early Church Theologians

There were many Christological interpretations that existed side by side both in the early church and in the New Testament. It was only after a lapse of time that some interpretations became much more common than others.² Alongside the *Logos* concept, early church theologians also speak of the conception of Christ as effected by the Holy Spirit. Some of the early writers such as Justin and Tertullian identify *Logos* with the Holy Spirit.³ This can also be seen in the writings of Hippolytus and Lactantius, although it is less explicit.⁴ They saw a close relation between Wisdom and the Spirit and this enabled

¹ Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 158.

² H. F. Woodhouse, 'The Limits of Pluralism', *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 34 (1981), 1-15, (p. 4).

³ Maurice Wiles, 'Some Reflections on the Origins of the Doctrine of the Trinity', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 8, Pt. 1 (1957), 92-106, (p. 96), citing Justin, *Apologia*, 1.33; Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean*, 26; *De Carne Christi*, 14.

⁴ Wiles, 'Some Reflections on the Origins of the Doctrine of the Trinity', p. 96, citing Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum*. 4; Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, iv. 12.

them to identify *Logos* with the Spirit.⁵ Irenaeus, Hermas and Justin used Wisdom and Spirit language alongside *Logos* language.⁶ Irenaeus sees the Word and the Spirit as “the two hands of the Father.”⁷ Congar explains that according to Irenaeus it is through the Spirit that we are united with Christ. The work of the Spirit is related to that of Christ. The Spirit is not opposed or autonomous or indifferent to Christ.⁸ Likewise, Boris Bobrinskoy explains that, for Irenaeus, the Holy Spirit seems to be significant for interpreting Christology, creation, salvation, church and Trinity, and that we can spot a genuine ‘Christology of the Holy Spirit’ in Irenaeus.⁹ Origen used Wisdom or Word alongside Father–Son language.¹⁰

In the third century, the Dynamic Monarchians held that Jesus became the Son of God at his baptism as the Holy Spirit or divine power descended upon him. Paul of Samosata spoke of the relation of the Spirit to Jesus as a gradual possession. He considered the Spirit

⁵ Yves M. J. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, trans. by David Smith (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983), pp. 10, 86.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁷ Wiles, ‘Some Reflections on the Origins of the Doctrine of the Trinity’, p. 96, citing Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, III. 21.4; V.1.3. See also R. Birch Hoyle, ‘Spirit (Holy), Spirit of God’, in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921), 784-803, (pp. 796-797).

⁸ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 37.

⁹ Bobrinskoy cites *Against Heresies* III,9.3 which says of the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit: “... the Spirit of God descended upon him, the Spirit of him who through the prophets had promised that he would anoint him, in order that we, receiving of the abundance of this unction, might be saved.” Similarly, *Against Heresies* V. 20.2 says “These things (the Lord) recapitulated in himself, uniting man to the Spirit and causing the Spirit to dwell in man, thereby making himself the head of the Spirit (*caput Spiritus*) and the Spirit to be the head of man: for by the Spirit we see, hear and speak.” In Bobrinskoy’s view, these quotes indicate a Christology of the Holy Spirit in Irenaeus. Boris Bobrinskoy, ‘The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ: “Pneumatic Christology” in the Cappadocian Fathers’, *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, 28 no. 1 (1984), 49-65, (p. 51).

¹⁰ Origen, *De Principiis*, 1.2.2, cited in Denis Edwards, ‘The Ecological Significance of God–Language’, *Theological Studies*, 60 no. 4 (1999), 708-722, (p. 713). Origen writes about the mystery of the incarnation: “But of all the marvellous and splendid things about him there is one that utterly transcends the limit of human wonder and is beyond the capacity of our weak mortal intelligence to think of or understand, namely, how this mighty power of the divine majesty, the very word of the Father, and the very wisdom of God, in which were created ‘all things visible and invisible,’ can be believed to have existed within the compass of that man who appeared in Judaea; yes, and how the wisdom of God can have entered into a woman’s womb and been born as a little child and uttered noises like those of crying children; and further, how it was that he was troubled, as we are told, in the hour of death, as he himself confesses when he says, ‘My soul is sorrowful even to death’; and how at the last he was led to that death which is considered by men to be the most shameful of all—even though on the third day he rose again.” Origen, *De Principiis*, 2.6.2, cited in Edwards, ‘The Ecological Significance of God–Language’, p. 713.

as a mere power or influence in Jesus.¹¹ Athanasius thought of Jesus Christ as the eternal Word, the Son of God is of one essence with the Father. However, the Wisdom language is not absent in Athanasius. He interprets the eternal Word as divine Wisdom.¹²

Athanasius writes about incarnation using the language of Wisdom.¹³ He says that the Wisdom existing in all things became flesh so that all might be saved.¹⁴ Theophilus considered Wisdom and Spirit as synonymous terms.¹⁵ Theodore of Mopsuestia speaks about the relationship between Christ and the Spirit.¹⁶ In John Chrysostom's view, the Spirit, filled Jesus from the very beginning. The Spirit dwelt in Jesus as it dwells in a sanctuary. The Spirit fashioned Jesus. The Spirit acted in and through the humanity of Jesus. After Pentecost the Spirit came to dwell in baptized people, fulfilling the redemptive work of Christ and leading them to the likeness of God.¹⁷

Bobrinskoy explains that in the early church theologians "'unction' is a perfectly adequate symbol to express the intimate relationship between Christ and the Spirit."¹⁸ The anointing of the Spirit or the unction suggests the very act of touching. There is no part in Jesus that is not touched by the Holy Spirit so that those who accept Christ accept him by means of

¹¹ Hoyle, 'Spirit (Holy), Spirit of God', p. 797. See also Norman Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century: A Spirit Christology* (London: Lutterworth P, 1968), pp. 7-8.

¹² Athanasius, *Contra Gentes* 42 (PG 25. 84-85), cited in Edwards, 'The Ecological Significance of God-Language', p. 714.

¹³ Athanasius writes, "The only-begotten, the absolute Wisdom of God is the creator and maker of all things. 'In wisdom you made all things,' scripture says; and again: 'the earth is full of your creation.' In order that what was made might not only be, but might be good, God willed that his own Wisdom should come down to the level of created thing and impress a sort of stamp and likeness of its image on all in common and on each individually, so that what was made would be seen to be wise, a work worthy of God." (Athanasius, *Discourses Against Arians* 2.78, cited in Edwards, 'The Ecological Significance of God-Language', p. 714.

¹⁴ In Athanasius' words, "The Wisdom of God formerly revealed itself through its own image impressed on created reality (by reason of which it is said to be created) and through itself revealed its own Father. It is the same Wisdom of God which later, being the Word, became flesh, as John says, and after destroying death and saving our race revealed himself still more fully and through himself his Father." Athanasius, *Discourses Against Arians* 2.81, cited in Edwards, 'The Ecological Significance of God-Language', p. 720.

¹⁵ J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th rev. edn (London: A & C Black, 1958), pp. 103-104.

¹⁶ According to Theodore of Mopsuestia "Christ had need of the Spirit in order to defeat the devil, to perform miracles and to receive (divine) instruction as to the activities he should undertake." PG LXVI. 996 B, cited in Bobrinskoy, 'The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ', p. 61.

¹⁷ Bobrinskoy, 'The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ', pp. 61, 65.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

the Spirit.¹⁹ St Basil says “the Spirit was made an unction; and being inseparably present, was with the very flesh of the Lord...”²⁰ The Spirit is inseparably present with Jesus. The Holy Spirit “descended upon the Son of God” and “made a dwelling-place within him.”²¹ In St Basil’s view, the reciprocal intimacy between the Spirit and Christ and the Spirit’s anointing of the humanity of Christ reveals the eternal unity between the Son and the Spirit in the Trinity.²²

In St Gregory of Nazianzen’s view, in Jesus there was a full presence of the Spirit whereas it was partial in the prophets and kings of the Old Testament. Jesus’ humanity was anointed by the Spirit and thus, by the anointing of the Spirit, Jesus can be called the anointed one or the anointed Christ.²³ Similarly, using the term ‘anointing,’ St Gregory of Nyssa speaks about the inseparability between the Spirit and Christ.²⁴ Gregory also uses the term ‘accompaniment’ to speak about the inseparable relationship between Christ and the Spirit.²⁵ Lactantius in the fourth century attributes the title Holy Spirit either to the Father or the Son. He does not recognise the Holy Spirit as a distinct *hypostasis*.²⁶ The divine power of the Spirit possessed Christ and he was able to perform his earthly ministry. It is this divine power he communicates to his disciples after the resurrection.²⁷

¹⁹ Bobrinskoy, ‘The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ’, p. 63.

²⁰ *De Spiritu Sancto* XVI. 39, cited in Bobrinskoy, ‘The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ’, pp. 61-62.

²¹ *Commentary on Ps. 44.8*, cited in Bobrinskoy, ‘The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ’, p. 62.

²² Bobrinskoy, ‘The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ’, p. 63.

²³ *Orations*, XXX. 21, cited in Bobrinskoy, ‘The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ’, p. 62.

²⁴ “There is no separation between the anointed Christ and the Spirit who anoints him, between the King and his Kingdom, between Wisdom and the Spirit of Wisdom, between Truth and the Spirit of Truth, between power and the Spirit of power; but as there is contemplated from all eternity in the Father the (person of) the Son, who is Wisdom, Truth, Counsel, Power, Knowledge and Understanding, so there is also contemplated in the Son (the Person of) the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Wisdom, of Truth, of Counsel and of understanding, and of all else that the Son is and is called.” *Contra Eunomium*, II.2, cited in Bobrinskoy, ‘The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ’, p. 62.

²⁵ *Great Catechism* 1:2, cited in Bobrinskoy, ‘The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ’, p. 64.

²⁶ Paul McGuckin, ‘Spirit Christology: Lactantius and His Sources’, *Heythrop Journal*, xxiv (1983), 141-148, (p. 142).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

Hence, what we understand about early Christianity is that, although we do not find a fully developed Spirit Christology, Jesus as the one anointed by the Spirit was one of the ways of understanding the nature of Jesus Christ. Each theologian can be studied in detail and different modalities of Spirit Christology can be traced. However, Jean Danielou puts the different trends of interpreting Jesus by way of the Spirit in early Christianity into two categories namely the Spirit Christologies of Ebionites, which he calls “heterodox”, and the Spirit Christologies of the Jerusalem community, which he terms “orthodox.”²⁸

The Ebionites conceded Christ as prophet or Messiah yet did not confess him as Son of God. Jesus was elevated to the divine Sonship at baptism due to the agency of the Holy Spirit. Jesus’ death did not have any soteriological implications for them since their soteriology focused on two dimensions, firstly on the apocalyptic–eschatological expectation of Jesus as the coming Son of Man. “Here, adoptionist Spirit–christology merges with an Angel–christology in which Jesus is identified with a supernatural angelic being who fulfils the millenarian expectation.”²⁹ Secondly, the Ebionites’ soteriology focused on the prophetic tradition. They believed that “the ‘True Prophet’ had arrived in the person of Jesus” and it was their conviction that “the prophetic office was a fruit of the divine Spirit (*theion pneuma*).”³⁰

The prophetic Spirit that was active throughout Jewish salvation history in various Biblical figures such as Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses was present in Jesus completely and in full. Jesus, following these Biblical figures who were the bearers of the Spirit or *Shekinah* (divine presence), came as the final revelation of the Spirit. “The

²⁸ This community includes “the Nazarenes, and other Jewish Christians and even Gentile Christians whose thought forms were borrowed from Judaism.” Jean Danielou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964), pp. 7-11, cited in Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 158.

²⁹ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 158.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

teaching of this prophetic Spirit culminates in Jesus. Jesus is the Messiah, bearer of the divine will and is witness to the monarchy of God (*monarchia tou theou*)."³¹ Ebionism has an inadequate view of *ruach/pneuma* resulting in binitarianism or modalism. It also shows an inadequate understanding of the ontological status of Christ that might result in adoptionism.

The orthodox Jewish–Christians and even Gentile–Christians of the emerging Catholic Church used spirit language to confess Jesus Christ. The orthodox Jewish–Christians, like the Ebionites, identified angels such as Michael or Gabriel with the Word or the Spirit.³² But by contrast, focusing on the present work of the Spirit, the Gentile–Christians identified the activity of the Spirit in the local churches with the reality of Christ. Moreover, most of the apostolic Fathers (such as Ignatius and Justin Martyr) acknowledged Jesus' birth through Mary and the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was "identified as the mode of Christ's pre–existence³³ or as the divine element of Christ in the incarnation."³⁴

In J. N. D. Kelly's opinion, this is an example of early Spirit Christology, by which he means that "in the historical Jesus Christ the pre–existent Son of God, Who is the divine spirit, united Himself with human nature."³⁵ Following this definition Ralph Del Colle

³¹ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, pp. 158-159.

³² "This identification can be found in Old Testament Pseudepigraphia (II Enoch, Ascension of Isaiah), New Testament Apocrypha (Gospel of Peter, Gospel of the Hebrews), and the Apostolic Fathers (The Didache, The Shepherd of Hermas)." Jean Danielou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, pp. 117-146, cited in Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 159.

³³ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 159, citing Clement, *Second Letter to the Corinthians*, 9:5 as an example.

³⁴ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 159, citing *The Shepherd of Hermas* as an example. Del Colle points out that in the *Fifth Similitude* (6:5-7) Hermas explains incarnation as a "union of flesh with the pre-existent Spirit."

³⁵ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 1960, reprint edn (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), p. 143, cited in Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 159.

says that it can be described as “an ontological utilization of Spirit in Christology.”³⁶ But Del Colle points out that, according to Lage Pernveden, the relationship between Spirit and Son of God in *The Shepherd of Hermas* is not ontological but soteriological.³⁷ This means “the pneumatic dimension of Christological language must be understood in reference to Christ’s saving work (soteriology) and not the person of Christ (Christology) is the proper place for pneumatological attribution.”³⁸ Del Colle says this difference between Kelly and Pernveden shows that there are different directions in which a Spirit Christology might proceed. He identifies at least three models of Spirit Christology in the pre-Chalcedonian period: firstly, Jesus as the bearer of the prophetic Spirit of revelation – a Christology of pneumatic inspiration; secondly, the Spirit as the subject of divinity in the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh – a Christology of pneumatic incarnation; and thirdly, the Spirit as the medium for incarnation and salvation – a Christology of pneumatic communication.

Ebionite Spirit Christology is an example of the first model that might end up in adoptionism. The interpretations of *The Shepherd of Hermas* by Kelly and Pernveden offer examples of the other two models. The second might be the ontological utilization of Spirit in Christology. The third is the soteriological utilization of the Spirit in Christology. At this point, we shall comment on adoptionism since that is one of the accusations against Spirit Christology. Rosato points out that some of the early pre-Chalcedonian Spirit Christologies show adoptionist tendencies.

For example, “the philanthropist position of the Ebionites stemmed from Essene dualism, from Jewish angelology and eschatology, from a strong rejection of Pauline Christology as

³⁶ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 159.

³⁷ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 160, citing Lage Pernveden, *The Concept of the Church in the Shepherd of Hermas* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1966), p. 49.

³⁸ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 160.

well as from an antitrinitarian concept of Jesus as the True Prophet adopted and inspired by Yahweh's Spirit to complete the Mosaic covenant."³⁹ This was a functional, soteriological Christology rather than a substantialist, ontological Christology. Yet the strength of adoptionist Christology was that it could incorporate the biblical, eschatological and soteriological elements in Christology. It was biblical over against the philosophical. It had a different framework to that which was used in the Christological controversies. The framework here was Jesus' relationship to the Spirit of Yahweh. In the early adoptionist Christology, "The person of Jesus was set into a larger framework – that of the spiritual, federal, and political concept of the Spirit of Yahweh, who was active in the history of the judges, the kings, and the prophets of the old covenant. As the true prophet, the new Moses, and the anointed Messiah, Jesus was rightly seen in the continuum of Spirit-filled figures of Judaism."⁴⁰

Another strength of adoptionist Christology is that it is eschatological, cosmic and universal. Spirit Christology not only affirms the historicity and temporal aspects of Christ's life but also gives an eschatological and universal character to Christology. "The biblical-pneumatological context of adoptionist Christology rightly highlighted the notion of Jesus as the new creation who was hovered over and breathed upon by the same creative Spirit of Yahweh who brooded over the chaos in Gen 1.2. Such a pneumatic perspective offered Christology not only biblical profundity but also cosmic validity."⁴¹ Therefore, any construal of Spirit Christology needs to take these strengths of adoptionist Christology while affirming Christ's ontological oneness with God. In the same way adoptionist

³⁹ Philip J. Rosato, 'Spirit Christology: Ambiguity and Promise', *Theological Studies*, 38 (1977), 423-449, (pp. 434-435).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 436.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Christology should not fail to take account of the insights of ontological Christology.

Rosato writes about adoptionist Christology:

Had that Christology equally stressed the pre-existent, the ontological, and the Trinitarian character of the person of Jesus, the history of Christology would have been quite different. The unachieved potential of Pneuma-sarx Christology was that it could have and should have shown that Jesus became in history what he already was from eternity. Instead, that Christology insisted on having Jesus become in history the Spirit-filled, eschatological, and paradigmatic figure which he was not beforehand.⁴²

As it was, the development of Spirit Christology in the early centuries was short-lived⁴³ and was soon marginalised when *Logos* Christology occupied the centre stage. Rosato says it is vital for our understanding of Christ that the pre-Chalcedonian Spirit Christologies be resuscitated.⁴⁴ Contemporary theologians are now acknowledging that Spirit Christology needs to be revitalized since it can contribute to our interpretation of the person and work of Christ from the perspective of the Spirit.⁴⁵ We shall now move on to the contemporary Western Spirit Christologies in the next section of this part.

2.3 Contemporary Western Spirit Christologies

Contemporary Western Spirit Christologies begin from a dissatisfaction with *Logos* Christology. They argue that Christology is essentially inseparable from pneumatology. So they attempt to interpret the person and work of Christ in the framework of pneumatic presence and agency. We can observe at least three approaches in contemporary Western Spirit Christologies. The first one is the reconstruction approach which attempts to reconstruct Christ, Spirit and Trinity, having the Hebrew understanding of Spirit as its point of departure. This approach is discussed with reference to Norman Hook, who seems

⁴² Rosato, 'Spirit Christology', p. 437-438.

⁴³ Barbara Finan, 'The Holy Spirit: An Issue in Theology', *Spirituality Today*, 38 (1986), 9-18, (p. 13).

⁴⁴ Rosato, 'Spirit Christology', pp. 431-438.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 423. See also Kilian McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' *Theological Studies*, 46 (1985), 191-227, (p. 215).

to be the first among the Protestants to propose Spirit Christology. The second is the replacement approach. This approach seeks to replace *Logos* Christology, and ultimately the doctrine of Trinity, and thus ends up in a form of unitarianism or binitarianism. In this chapter, we discuss this model with reference to G. W. H. Lampe who was an Anglican and Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge. The third approach is a complementary approach, which does not aim to replace *Logos* Christology but seeks ways to complement it with Spirit Christology. This approach is discussed with reference to Jürgen Moltmann, a German theologian from the Reformed tradition, John D. Zizioulas, a Greek Orthodox theologian, and David Coffey, an Australian Roman Catholic theologian.

2.3.1 The Reconstructionist Approach

2.3.1.1 Norman Hook: A Hebraic Way of Thinking

Among twentieth century theologians who reflect upon Spirit Christology, Norman Hook seems to be a pioneer in this area. In his book *Christ in the Twentieth Century: A Spirit Christology*,⁴⁶ he proceeds with an explicit assumption that the intellectual obligation of theology is to represent Christian faith in new categories. He thinks that the task of theology today is to make Christ meaningful and relevant to the people of this age. Like other critiques of classical Christology, Hook argues that *Logos* Christology, with its notion of the pre-existent Christ, presents Christ as Unique Man and not a genuine man⁴⁷ since Christ's human nature depended on the eternal *Logos*.⁴⁸ The basic assumption underlying this interpretation of Christ is that God is immutable and impassible.⁴⁹ Consequently, the insoluble problem in *Logos* Christology is its docetic notion of death.

⁴⁶ London: Lutterworth P, 1968

⁴⁷ Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 55, 59.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

“It is incredible that the God–man could ‘be holden of death’, seeing that God cannot die. In that case, it could not be said that God raised him from the dead.”⁵⁰ Such an assumption maintained a clear distinction between Christ and the rest of humanity.

However, Hook does not fail to point out the merits of *Logos* theology. The advantages of *Logos* Christology are that it justified the worship of Jesus and provided a framework that was familiar and intelligible to the Gentiles. But the main difficulty in *Logos* Christology is that it does not do justice to the historicity of Jesus Christ. So Hook appeals for a Spirit Christology. His claim is that Spirit Christology would yield all the values of *Logos* Christology without the inherent difficulties involved in it.

His methodological starting point for Spirit Christology is the humanity of Jesus. The Synoptic Gospels provide him with sources since the starting point in these Gospels is the humanity of Jesus Christ. In the fourth Gospel, *Logos* is the eternal divine person. The central focus of this Gospel is the *Logos* made flesh and not the historical Jesus.⁵¹ He says, “The Synoptic portrait begins with man and then goes on to the how much more. The Johannine portrait begins with the divine *Logos* and then fits him into the mould of a

⁵⁰ Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, p. 103.

⁵¹ But Hook defends the fourth evangelist saying that it was the mission motive to present Christ to the Greeks in their own categories that propelled him to use *Logos* language. He writes: “In Greek thought, the *Logos* denotes the rational principle of the universe by which it is sustained. But Jewish thinkers, influenced no doubt by Greek philosophy, had reached a very similar conception in the notion of the Divine Wisdom. In Proverbs 8-9, for example, the personification of Wisdom is more than a mere literary device. Much later Jewish thinkers, writing in Greek, combined the two concepts, using the preference the concept of the *Logos*. It was therefore, easy for the fourth evangelist to take further step of explaining Jesus by identifying him with the *Logos* of contemporary Greek and Hebrew thought” (Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 43-44). James D. G. Dunn says that most specialists “would agree that the principal background against which the *Logos* prologue must be set is the Old Testament itself and the thought of inter-Testamental Hellenistic Judaism, particularly as expressed in the Wisdom literature.” James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (London: SCM, 1980), p. 215. See also Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, trans. by Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall, 2nd edn (London: SCM, 1963), p. 257. Dunn further says that the author of the prologue to the fourth Gospel was, “the first to take that step which no Hellenistic–Jewish author had taken before him, the first to identify the word of God as a particular person: and so far as our evidence is concerned the Fourth Evangelist was the first Christian writer to conceive clearly of the personal preexistence of the *Logos*-Son and to present it as a fundamental part of his message.” Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, p. 249.

man.”⁵² The Synoptic Gospels, in contrast to the Johannine portrayal (and also the Pauline and Petrine portrayals), present Jesus as a human in his own historical context.⁵³ Hence, Hook relies on the data of the Synoptic Gospels, which according to him fall into the category of history and not interpretation.

Further, he thinks that the Synoptic Gospels present Jesus as a Spirit-filled man. This is in line with the Hebraic way of thinking which saw exceptional and amazing human powers as the result of the activity of the Spirit of God.⁵⁴ Hook says that against this background it was natural for early Christians to explain the unique human personality of Jesus in terms of the influence of the Spirit of God.

Hence, he argues that the followers of Jesus did not start with a handed-down theology and then come to experience Christ. Rather, it was their experiences of Jesus that led them to articulate their theology. Jesus' life and teaching about God made them perceive

⁵² Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, p. 59.

⁵³ Perhaps his comparison between Mark's portrayal of Jesus and John's portrayal of Jesus makes this point clear. In Mark, the portrait presented is that of “a prophet who is not without honour save in his own country” (6:4). Jesus disclaims the title ‘good’ on the ground that it is applicable to God alone (10: 18). But his disciples are puzzled about him. ‘What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’ (4.41). ‘They were sore amazed and wondered’ (6.51). But he marvels that they do not understand him. Peter, however, is commended when he confesses him to be the Messiah (8:29). His Messianic role is exemplified when, at the Last Supper, he inaugurates the New Covenant (14: 22-25). However, the word ‘Messiah’ does not reveal the whole mystery. He is the Son of Man who must suffer, and after three days rise again (8:31). This Son of Man is to come again in the glory of the Father with the holy angels (8:38). He will come in the clouds with great glory (13:26).” Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, p. 57. Hook says that the fourth Gospel presents a different Jesus though there is some identity with the Marcan portrayal. “He is the only begotten Son of the Father (1:18). He manifests ‘glory’ (2:11). He is knowledgeable about heavenly things (3:18), and does not refute the charge that he makes himself equal with God (5:18). He came down from heaven (6:38). He who has seen him has seen the Father (14:9). He is the Light of the world (8:12). He is not of the world but abideth forever (8:23, 58). He can speak of ‘we’ in reference to the Godhead, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father (17:21). He knows all things that should come upon him (18:4), and we should contrast this with the human figures in Gethsemane in Mark's Gospel. Significantly, John omits this scene in Gethsemane. He tells the Samaritan woman all things that she ever did (4:39).” Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 58-59.

⁵⁴ Hook points out that in the Old Testament, the influence of the Holy Spirit was conceded in many ways and in diverse forms. It was seen in the ‘enhancement of natural powers’ as in the case of Othniel (Judg 3:10), in the ‘wisdom and discernment’ as in the case of Joshua (Deut 34:9), in addition to wisdom and understanding, craftsmanship as in the case of Bezaleel (Exod 31:3) and Prophecy was another distinctive mark of the influence of the Spirit as seen in the case of many prophets (Mic 3:8; Isa 61:1). The manifestation of the Spirit was seen in the phenomenon of inspiration whereby certain individuals or groups became the agents of divine communication to other people.

something unique about him.⁵⁵ Most significantly, Jesus encapsulated the deep meaning of God as *Abba* over against the Hebrew monotheistic tendency to stress the transcendence of God. He reviews how Jesus was viewed and interpreted by his followers. They expressed his genius, his remarkable words and deeds in numerous ways. Many titles were ascribed to Jesus such as 'Messiah,'⁵⁶ 'Son of God,'⁵⁷ 'Lord,'⁵⁸ and Jesus' self-designation 'Son of Man.'⁵⁹ These titles, while affirming the humanity of Jesus, tell us something more about him: that he was a man endowed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

⁵⁵ In Hook's view, Harnack very well summarises the contrast between Jesus' teaching and the views of God that had come to prevail in his day: "*They* thought of God as a despot guarding the ceremonial observances in His household; *he* breathed in the presence of God. *They* saw Him only in the law, which they had converted into a labyrinth of dark defiles, blind alleys and secret passages; *he* saw and felt Him everywhere. *They* were in possession of a thousand of His commandments, and thought therefore that they knew Him; *he* had only one, and knew Him by it. *They* had made this religion into an earthly trade, and there was nothing more detestable; *he* proclaimed the living God and the soul's nobility." Adolf von Harnack, *History of Dogma* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1958), pp. 50-51, cited by Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, p. 18.

⁵⁶ According to Hook, this title acquires a new meaning in the New Testament. It transcends the mere materialistic interests of the Jews. Further, this title stresses the genuine humanity of Jesus, who was endowed with the gift of the Spirit of God to accomplish his will. Hook points out that in Psalms of Solomon, one can observe an interpretation of Messiah who is actually a king raised by God to deliver His people and reign over them in righteousness. "He will be strong 'in Holy Spirit,' and overcome his enemies, not by military force but 'by the word of his mouth.' He would be free from sin and endued by God with wisdom and understanding." Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 35-36.

⁵⁷ Hook comments that this title unlike the title 'Messiah' was meaningful to the Gentiles, for they attributed this title to the people who showed extraordinary power and ability. However, the Old Testament usage of this title for kings and priests signifies a relation of obedience (e.g. Exod 4:22). If Jesus had used this title for himself, it was in the sense of obedient service to God. The Old Testament understanding and Jesus' own understanding do not suggest an ontological relationship. Nevertheless, such an idea is seen in the writings of Paul and John, yet this is a natural transition from functional to ontological. Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 36-37.

⁵⁸ Hook says that this was a familiar title used by the Gentiles to refer to many Lords and Gods. In the Old Testament, this title *adonai* was a substitute for the holy, ineffable and unutterable name of God YHWH (Yahweh). It was translated in the Septuagint as *Kurios*. In the New Testament, it is inspired after resurrection, yet this post-resurrection title was very much grounded on the reality that Jesus exercised lordship over people. In Hook's view, this title takes us theologically far beyond the titles Messiah and Son of God in a sense that something more must be stated about this earthly Jesus. Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 37-39.

⁵⁹ Hook points out that in the Old Testament this title "emphasizes the contrast between the human and the divine, and the dignity which God bestows upon man in choosing to speak with him." He says that in Dan 7:13ff where the Aramaic equivalent of this word is used represents a community or kingdom of saints. Son of man is a man-like figure who is not a historical figure. This apocalyptic notion of son of man occurs in the book of Enoch but it is less likely that Jesus had taken this idea from the book of Enoch. It is more likely, he saw himself as a representative of humanity. He saw himself as the suffering servant, one who represented Israel or humanity and suffered vicariously on their behalf. Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 39-41.

Therefore, in Hook's view, the Synoptic Gospels see the meaning of Christ's existence in terms of the activity of the Spirit of God. Matthew and Luke record the birth of Jesus as by the agency of the Spirit of God. All three Gospels describe the baptism and temptation of Jesus as events motivated by the Holy Spirit. Luke describes Jesus as 'exulting in the Holy Spirit.'⁶⁰ The Lukan narrative of the 'Nazareth Manifesto'⁶¹ presents Jesus as quoting Isaiah 61, and seeing himself as the fulfilment of this prophecy, as one anointed by the Spirit of God. By the power of the Spirit, he casts out devils; in the same power of the Spirit, he preaches. Through him, there would be an outpouring of the Spirit on all men because 'God had anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost and with power.'⁶²

Hook argues that when we think of Jesus in terms of the activity of the Spirit we get a different picture of Jesus Christ. We see a man who was completely dedicated to and correspondingly sensitive to the activity of the Spirit of God in his own life. The place of the Spirit in Jesus' life can be expressed in many ways. He was 'indwelt' by the Spirit or he was 'possessed' by the Spirit or he was 'inspired' by the Spirit or 'it was a state of union of human spirit and divine Spirit' or Jesus as a 'Spirit-filled man' and so on.

But whatever word we use it must not suggest two centres of consciousness. The consciousness of Jesus must be unitary, and his hypostasis human, but we must conceive the indwelling, or possession, or union, as adequate to express and safeguard the truth that, in and through him, God has entered fully into our human estate. That, after all, was the main concern of the fathers of Chalcedon, who believed they were interpreting the truth of Scripture.⁶³

⁶⁰ Luke 10:21. Rudolf Schnackenburg highlights another aspect, namely, the descent of the Spirit on Jesus at baptism in the form of a dove (Luke 3:21-22), which indicates the reality of the Spirit. "Luke places value on this visible, downright physically comprehensible event ('in bodily form') in order to underline the reality of the Spirit descending upon Jesus." Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Jesus in the Gospels: A Biblical Christology*, trans. by Jr. O. C. Dean (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), p. 134.

⁶¹ Luke 4:16ff.

⁶² Acts 10:38.

⁶³ Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, p. 74.

Jesus was a Spirit-filled man like the prophets of the Old Testament but Jesus was distinctively different from them. In Jesus, the activity of the Spirit was continuous, unlike the prophets in whom it was sporadic and occasional.⁶⁴

If we concede that Jesus was a real human being, we must say that his human *hypostasis*, to use the language of Chalcedon, was not replaced by the divine *hypostasis*, but was in such close contact as to produce a unitary consciousness, a consciousness which was human, but at all points in the very closest contact with the divine. This would be in line with the prophetic experience, where the divine operates in and through the human without in any way diminishing or destroying the human...in the case of Jesus, however, we would need to add the adverb 'continuously.'⁶⁵

So the uniqueness of Jesus is in his Spirit-filled life. However, Hook claims that Spirit Christology would demand a new look at the present doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Taking support from Pringle-Pattison,⁶⁶ Hook affirms that the Spirit is not a third agency in the Godhead distinct from the Father and the Son.

The Spirit is not a 'person' existing independently of God, but a way of speaking about God's reality in relation to all that exists and happens. God as Spirit is God immanent in creation. But the immanent Spirit is also the transcendent Spirit, whom Christ taught us to call Father. In and through Christ, the Spirit, who is God, had acted in a new way.⁶⁷

The Easter event gives a further confirmation of the Spirit's involvement in the person and work of Jesus Christ.⁶⁸ The affirmation of Spirit Christology is that the Spirit raised Jesus

⁶⁴ George S. Hendry makes the same point. See George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (London: SCM, 1957), pp. 11-29. Alasdair Heron sees the Old Testament expectation of Spirit-filled Messiah and its fulfilment in Jesus Christ. Alasdair I. C. Heron, *The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit in the Bible in the History of Christian Thought and in Recent Theology* (London: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1983), p. 14ff. John V. Taylor emphasises the continuity between the Hebrew Spirit and of the Spirit of Christ. John V. Taylor, *The Go-between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission* (London: SCM, 1972), p. 7. See also Rosato, 'Spirit Christology', pp. 423-449.

⁶⁵ Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 72-73.

⁶⁶ In Pringle-Pattison's view, Chalcedon conceived Spirit as third agency independent of Father and Son. According to Pattison, "the conception of the Spirit is in fact the final and complete account of the one God, who is the Father of spirits, their Creator, Inspirer, and Redeemer." Seth Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of Immortality: The Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh in the Year 1922* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), p. 11, cited by Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, p. 76.

⁶⁷ Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, p. 76.

⁶⁸ Hook says that 'Reduced' Christologies, which get no further than seeing Christ as 'the man for others,' fail to do justice to this divine side, and are compelled to reduce the Easter event to a mere change of outlook on the part of the disciples. Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 80-81. According to Hook, whether we believe in the resurrection or not depends upon the way we perceive human self. He cites W. R.

from the dead. Therefore, Hook claims that Spirit Christology does not pose a *docetic* view of death of Son of God as does *Logos* Christology. As we mentioned earlier, if the death of God–man is difficult to explain then it is equally difficult to explain the resurrection. Hook states that, like the *Logos* doctrine, Spirit Christology may not be able to offer an explanation of the fact that Jesus rose again but it suggests “an approach which is credible.”⁶⁹

Following the Hebrew mode of thinking, Spirit Christology affirms the Hebrew holistic understanding of the human being as integrated soul and body. The Hebrews believed that “the dead would be raised in their physical bodies to share the bliss of a heaven upon earth.”⁷⁰ It is from this Hebrew understanding that the resurrection of Jesus must be seen. The resurrected Christ is an embodied person but not subject to spatio–temporal contingencies. For the Greeks the soul is indispensable and the body is discarded in death. Hook comments, “there is a deep contrast between this warm and human view of eternal life, and the cold bloodless view of the Greeks. And, in this matter of the importance of the body as something vital to what we understand by a man...”⁷¹ Christ is the first–fruits of the resurrection and we share in this embodied existence in union with Christ.

Matthews who thinks, “The attempt to deal with selfhood as a mere flux or stream of events, or of impressions and ideas, breaks down because the self as experienced is obviously something more than that. We feel and know that we are unique centres of consciousness and activity. We ‘have’ the ideas and impressions. But when we consider the status in reality of this ‘centre’, we find ourselves in difficulties. It does not appear to be part of the events which are presented in its experience, and, at the same time, we cannot conceive it as having any existence apart from the experience. Man is ‘the great amphibian’—on one side a native of the world where change rules everywhere, but on the other side mysteriously beyond it. It is remarkable that all the great constructive thinkers, in their different manners, have held that there is a supra-temporal basis for the human self.” W. R. Matthews, *Three Sermons on Human Nature: And a Dissertation upon the Nature of Virtue with Introduction, Analyses and Notes* (London: Bell, 1934), p. 74.

⁶⁹ Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, p. 81.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

So Christ rightfully belongs to the Godhead. Hook states, “a Spirit Christology would see no difficulty in placing Jesus Christ ‘alongside’ the Godhead, for that is where the man Jesus properly belongs. But because he is the unique man whose human hypostasis is forever united with the Spirit, he belongs to the Godhead, and is therefore to be worshipped.”⁷² Thus Hook shows that Spirit Christology affirms all the merits of *Logos* Christology without yielding to the difficulties that are inherent in *Logos* Christology.

The strength of Hook’s approach lies firstly in seeing Jesus in the light of the prophetic tradition.⁷³ He was conceived by the Spirit and was anointed by the Spirit to do his mission. The locus of contention around Hook’s view is on the issue of the language of the creeds. The creeds in themselves (particularly the creeds of Nicaea and Chalcedon) do not sufficiently speak about the activity of the Holy Spirit in the incarnation and in the Church. Moreover, the abstract metaphysical formulae were constructed in a particular cultural and historical context. Hook’s Spirit Christology is clearly a development that stands in contrast to this abstraction. He can avoid philosophical categories such as *hypostasis* and *physis* in speaking about the constitution of Christ by using the biblical category of Spirit. Christ’s mission is seen as a continuation of the Spirit’s mission. In a way similar to some of the pre-Chalcedonian Spirit Christologies, Hook sees the person and work of Jesus as part of the universal activity of the Spirit, which was active in creation, in the Hebrew prophets and men of extraordinary gifts. This activity continues in a new way in Jesus Christ and constitutes his person and mission.

⁷² Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century*, p. 77.

⁷³ Similarly, the Catholic theologian Joseph Wong sees the interrelation between Jesus’ prophetic Spirit, filial Spirit and his mission for he says “The Spirit of Jesus is essentially a filial and prophetic Spirit, or, a Spirit of sonship and of mission.” Joseph H. P. Wong, ‘The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus’, *Gregorianum*, 73 (1992), 57-95, (p. 83).

Secondly, Hook rightly observes that the Synoptic Gospels offer ample resources to interpret Christ from the vantage point of the Spirit. He seems to discard the fourth Gospel completely as unhelpful in this endeavour. However, there are some theologians who think that the real essence of the fourth Gospel is found in its mysticism. For example, John A.T. Robinson says that eternal glory and humanity coincide in the prologue. The theme of the whole Gospel is the interrelation of the realm of eternity and the world of space and time, *Logos* and flesh. Thus, it is all about the relationship between two levels of reality. "The great affirmation of this writer is that they coincide in Christ: the Word becomes flesh and the glory of the invisible God is seen and heard and handled."⁷⁴

Thirdly, Hook's interpretation of the Holy Spirit as self-giving, self-revealing and fostering communion between the divine and the human is helpful not only for understanding Jesus' relationship with God but also the believer's relationship with Jesus. However, concerning the personhood of the Holy Spirit, Hook's interpretation of the Holy Spirit as a way of speaking about God's reality poses certain difficulties. For Hook the Spirit is a way of thinking of God in action. According to him the Spirit is not a 'person' existing independently of God. This raises questions: How is the Spirit related to God the Father? And what are the structural differences between the Son and the Spirit? As Jenson says, this "problem is religiously important: Is invocation of the Spirit anything distinctive over against invocation simply of God? Is Pentecost a peer of Easter or does it merely display a meaning that Easter would in any case have?"⁷⁵ Colin Gunton speaks of the

⁷⁴ John A. T. Robinson, 'The Use of the Fourth Gospel for Christology Today', in *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament: Studies in Honour of Charles Francis Digby Moule*, ed. by Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 61-78, (pp. 64-65), citing W.R. Matthews *The Problem of Christ in the Twentieth Century*, (London, 1950), pp.7-8.

⁷⁵ Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology I: The Triune God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 146.

necessity of expressing concisely the personal distinctness of the Holy Spirit in relation to both Son and Father in our theology.⁷⁶

Consequently, the Trinity, for Hook, is just three ways of speaking about God. This undermines the distinct economy of the Son and the Spirit. Spirit Christology, as being a study of the relationship between the Spirit and Christ, needs to maintain the mutuality and reciprocity between Christ and the Spirit. This sets both Christology and pneumatology in a Trinitarian framework. Therefore, a more Trinitarian approach is needed in our reflection on the Spirit and the Christ–event.

2.3.2 The Replacement Approach

2.3.2.1 G. W. H. Lampe: God as Spirit

Lampe situates the early church's interpretation of Christology in the church's struggle to answer some significant questions such as: How can the impassible God intervene in the process of human history? How can there be any relationship between the unchanging God and changing realities. How is the One God related to the many?⁷⁷ These concerns of the early church necessitated the introduction of bridge terms such as *Logos*, Wisdom and Spirit. He observes that in the Hebrew language, the terms Word, Wisdom and Spirit are not *hypostatic* beings. Rather, they denote God's outreach towards creation. These terms link the transcendent deity with the finite realm of space and time.⁷⁸ They were applied to God by analogy. But gradually the analogy became the description of God himself. The prophetic 'Word of God,' which evoked a certain experience and awareness of God's

⁷⁶ Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), pp. 132-133.

⁷⁷ G. W. H. Lampe, *God as Spirit* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), p. 38.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

communication to humans, became a *hypostatized* Word of God in the Johannine prologue.⁷⁹

In Lampe's view, the *Logos* is *hypostatized* and identified with the man Jesus and then the personality of the man Jesus is projected back onto the *Logos*. Jesus is interpreted as the pre-existent Son, and the Son is interpreted as a pre-existent Jesus.⁸⁰ The *enhypostatization* of human nature in the eternal *Logos* exempts Jesus from the relativities of history. The mythological idea of God becoming man introduces a "hierarchically structured divine being" rather than God being approached by the "immanental personal presence" and inevitably leads to ditheism or towards Arianism.⁸¹ Here, "God's transcendence comes to be separated from his immanence in a way that is almost analogous to the distinction between cause and effect."⁸²

Consequently, this introduces a notion that creation and redemption are two separate activities of God. This scheme of discontinuous process entails a belief in the notion of the "external creation of man,"⁸³ "historic fall" and "the irruption of God as Redeemer."⁸⁴ The

⁷⁹ Lampe says that such a tendency can be traced back to Philo. Philo identifies the *Logos* with the archetypal man or the immortal man but the idea is different from incarnation. In Philo's thought *Logos* is not a pre-existent being in heaven. The Platonic-Philonic form *Logos* does not suggest a *hypostatization* of a person as it is in Johannine prologue. The *Logos* of God in Platonic-Philonic form can be identified with the *cosmos noetos* itself since the identification of the planner with the plan is possible. *Cosmos aisthetos* is a copy of the same *Logos*-image; the image of the image, human reason is a copy of the archetypal *Logos*. In Johannine prologue "the personally existent individual, Jesus, was none other than the *Logos*, and his personal identity could ... be projected on to the *Logos* in such a way that the *Logos* becomes Jesus writ large, a divine Jesus in heaven before he came down to earth." Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 39-40.

⁸⁰ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 140.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 132.

⁸³ Like Lampe, Elizabeth Johnson thinks, "creation is not a one-time event, an act that produces the world and then departs. In this sense, the Creator Spirit is as far as possible from the distant, detached God envisioned by Enlightenment deism. Rather, her creative activity involves a continuous energizing, an ongoing sustaining of the world throughout the broadsweep of history. She is the giver of life and lover of life, pervading the cosmos and all of its interrelated creatures with life. If she were to withdraw her divine presence everything would go back to nothing." Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992), p. 134. Also in Schoonenberg's view, "God in his creation does not work merely from outside, he is at the same time

understanding of creation externally as God fashioning humans from outside himself rather than as an “inward communion” of God’s Spirit with the human spirit reduces the role of the creator Spirit in the process of creation. The historic fall and a fresh initiative of God to redeem humanity undermines the role of the Spirit in redemption.⁸⁵

Lampe claims that *Logos* Christology was the church’s attempt to express her faith on the basis of Platonist presuppositions, where a concept of mediator is required to bridge the gulf between creator and creatures. The church’s articulation of the relationship between the One and the many, the transcendence and the immanence of God needs a different frame of reference from the Platonic framework. Precisely here for Lampe, the concept of God as Spirit is helpful not only to understand the creator–creation relationship but also to untangle many complexities that beset our interpretation of Christ.⁸⁶

The Spirit is an immanent presence in the cosmos and in human beings but at the same time it is transcendent.⁸⁷ The bridge term, ‘the Spirit of God,’ refers to God himself. It expresses the personal outreach of God. However, unlike other bridge terms, ‘the Spirit of God’ does not yield to the tendency of *hypostatization* because of the “vagueness and imprecision” of the concept of Spirit.⁸⁸ At the same time, Lampe says, this very resistance to *hypostatization* need not lead us to conceive the Spirit in impersonal terms. He says,

immanent in it and works from within, and this means that he acts in union with his creatures.” Piet J. A. M. Schoonenberg, *The Christ* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1972), p. 73.

⁸⁴ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 34. Johnson makes a similar point. According to her, God’s relationship with the world cannot be conceived as “occasional intrusion or intervention” rather “God is in the world as ground, support, and goal of its historical, struggling existence.” Johnson, *She Who Is*, pp. 229-230. She also cites Karl Rahner who interprets divine presence in the world as “the infinite incomprehensible mystery and absolute future, present intrinsically in the world all along as that which provides its ultimate consummation and so sustains its movement towards this from within.” Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 230, citing Rahner, ‘On Recognizing the Importance of Thomas Aquinas’, *Theological Investigations*, 13:11. She also points out that “this vision of God’s immanent presence to the world has found new expression in the striking image of the world as God’s body.” Citing Sallie McFague, *Models of God* (London: SCM Press, 1987), pp. 69-78, n.12.

⁸⁵ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, pp. 22-23.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 132-133.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

“When the term ‘Spirit’ is understood in a fully personal sense, it is peculiarly valuable as a way of speaking about God as he is experienced in intimate communion with rational human beings.”⁸⁹

Lampe argues that the Christ–event can be interpreted in terms of *Logos* or Wisdom or Spirit, since all these terms essentially speak of God’s presence and action in Jesus. But *Logos* and Wisdom have the disadvantage of reducing the personal interaction of God to the rational dimension and thus have difficulty in avoiding reductionism. In this case, Christology is articulated in sophisticated abstract rational categories. On the other hand, ‘Spirit’ seems to lend itself to various interpretations not confining itself to one mode of divine–human interaction.

‘Spirit’... seems better able to express the truth that God’s interaction with human persons, and the integration of human personality with God, takes place at every level, involving the intellect but the will, the emotions, and the subconscious. To use the concept of ‘Logos’ to express this communion between God and man, and to say that it is man’s own *logos*, his rational faculty, which furnishes his link with the creative Logos of God, tends towards a restricted and over–intellectualized conception of the divine–human encounter. It may also suggest that divinity, almost equated with rationality, inheres by nature in the constitution of man and is less than the personal grace of God, that is to say, God’s personal presence of evoking from man a personal response of trust and love. It is, in fact, less easy to recognize love as the primary operation of the ‘Logos’ than as the chief fruit of the ‘Spirit’; for the term ‘Spirit’ carries with it a greater connotation of freedom and of personal volition than ‘Logos’, and perhaps also than ‘Wisdom’, for ‘the Spirit blows where it will.’⁹⁰

However, Lampe realises that this pneumatological starting point for interpreting Christ might raise the question as to whether one should reject incarnational Christology⁹¹ and

⁸⁹ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 44.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 116, 142.

⁹¹ This means, in Lampe’s words, “a divine being, the eternal Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, assumed human nature so as to become the personal subject of the human experiences recorded in the Gospels, while at the same time not ceasing to operate divinely.” Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 12.

replace it with inspirational Christology.⁹² In his opinion, “this is an oversimplification of the Christological question.”⁹³ However, what is significant for him is what we mean by incarnation. According to him, incarnation should not be interpreted in literal, non-personal terms. Incarnation needs to be interpreted in inspirational terms.

‘Incarnation’ must involve far more than a physical embodiment of one who is substantially and personally God. It has to express the idea of union between God and man at the personal level. This implies a union of will and a union of mind, a union in which the characteristic qualities of divine activity, above all self-sacrificing, compassionate, love, find expression in a human personality without derogating from its human freedom. The analogy of personal union between human beings at the deepest level of thought and feeling and will indicates that a union of personal deity with human personality can only be a perfected form of inspiration.⁹⁴

The experience of the Spirit as “inspiring, motivating, empowering, vivifying, indwelling, and acting in many ways”⁹⁵ is an experience of personal communion with the transcendent God who becomes immanent in human personality that cannot be systematically analysed or described precisely. It is “an incarnation of God as Spirit in every man as a human spirit.”⁹⁶ In other words the “divine puts on the human” or the Spirit is “clothing itself” with a person.⁹⁷ It is this understanding of the personal communion between the divine Spirit and the human spirit that serves as a framework to interpret various facets of Christian faith.⁹⁸ And it is with the use of the same framework that Lampe develops a Spirit Christology.

⁹² This means “the subject of the experiences recorded in the gospels was, in the last resort, a ‘mere’ man who was ‘only’ human, however closely he might be related to God by grace.” Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 12.

⁹³ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 12.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 45.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 47. Lampe refers to the Old Testament passages such as Judg 6:34, 1 Chron 12:18, 2 Chron 24:20 which according to him suggest the idea that the divine puts on the human or clothes itself with the human.

⁹⁸ For example, Lampe interprets revelation as an event that happens in a divine-human dialogue. “... revelation comes to men only in personal dialogue between their imaginative insight and God’s creative power. It is this interaction of insight with inspiration which may make certain events, whether remarkable in themselves or quite ordinary, become for us acts of God, revelatory of his dealings with us ...” G. W. H. Lampe, ‘The Holy Spirit and the Person of Christ’, in *Christ, Faith and History*, ed. by G. W. Sykes and J. P. Clayton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 44. Likewise, the concept of inspiration is a rational, conscious wilful interaction between divine Spirit and the human spirit. The reductionist

The starting point for Spirit Christology is not the pre-existent Christ but the human Jesus who was inspired by God. It is the coming together of Spirit and spirit. This is the union of mind, will and feeling. The Spirit inspired Jesus and his response was total. Jesus had an unbroken relationship with the Spirit, a relationship of trust and free obedience.⁹⁹ Jesus can be called the revelation of God because he lived a life that is one with the Spirit of God.

...God indwelt and motivated the human spirit of Jesus in such a way that in him, uniquely, the relationship for which man is intended by his Creator was fully realized; that through Jesus God acted decisively to cause men to share in his relationship to God, and that the same God, the Spirit who was in Jesus, brings believers into that relationship of 'sonship' towards himself and forms them into a human community in which, albeit partially and imperfectly, the Christlike character which is the fruit of that relationship is re-presented.¹⁰⁰

Thus the person of Jesus is significant for Lampe since God acted in and through Jesus. God as Spirit reveals himself as Spirit incarnate in the human life of Jesus.¹⁰¹ The essential Christological conviction is that God has acted in Jesus on behalf of humanity and brought salvation. This soteriological conviction shapes Christology. Lampe asks,

Was there an act of salvation which God performed once and for all at a particular moment in history? Was this a divine irruption into a fallen world to rescue it from the powers of evil, save man from sin and from the consequential wrath of God, and restore him to the divine likeness in which he was created? Or is salvation a process rather than an act, continuous with, and, indeed, but one aspect of, the process of creation itself?¹⁰²

understanding of the Spirit as impersonal force or what Lampe calls "docetic pneumatology" reduces human response to God's Spirit to impersonal categories. Hence, inspiration is understood as 'possession' or 'invasion' of superhuman energy. Human beings are passive objects subject to the manipulation of power, suspension of rational faculty and moral judgement. Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 58.

⁹⁹ Lampe explains that in Jesus, self-seeking lovelessness was continuously overcome. This may be termed as the sinlessness of Jesus. It was a life of complete self-dedication and commitment to the Spirit of God within. This may be called deification. Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁰ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 11.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 138.

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 14-15.

In Lampe's view, creation, fall and redemption are not events that happened at one point of time in history, but rather a continuous process.¹⁰³ Creation is essentially a process of inward development. "Creation itself is a process of personal development, and the creation of man in God's image and likeness, as a Son of God, means the making of a human spirit *in relationship*."¹⁰⁴ Salvation is to be seen as part of God's creative activity. One meaning of the term salvation is "making whole" and this means that the human spirit in communion with the divine Spirit comes to an awareness of God's presence and responds to God in trust and obedience.¹⁰⁵ So salvation is essentially a relationship between God and human beings. It is a "creative interaction of God's Spirit with the spirit of man."¹⁰⁶ It is "forming human personality from within by communion with it."¹⁰⁷ Salvation is "the victory of God's Spirit within man over the sin which is the misuse of his freedom."¹⁰⁸ Hence, the idea that salvation is brought about by the descent of God in a fresh irruption in human history is misleading. Lampe uses the phrase 'Kingdom of God' to denote the experience of salvation. The Kingdom of God is not the geographical

¹⁰³ Lampe refers to Irenaeus who thought of human beings in the process of growth moving towards perfection. "Man, according to Irenaeus, is first moulded by God's hands, then he receives the infusion of the soul, the life-principle, and finally through Christ he is given the life-giving Spirit that makes him God's son." Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 18, citing Irenaeus. *Against Heresies* 5.12.2. In Lampe's view, Irenaeus is echoing the thought of Paul whose new man 'in Christ,' who is a son of God, indwelt by God's Spirit, 'is being renewed according to the Creator's image' (Col. 3.10). The Creator's intention in making man is thus at last being realized: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, 'we all reflect (or 'behold') as in a mirror the splendour of the Lord; thus we are transfigured into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit' (2 Cor 3: 17-18)" Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 18. However, Lampe differs from Irenaeus. Lampe denies that there was a historical Adam and a historical fall. The myth of the fall "is a description, and not an explanation, of man's continuing temptation and fall." Lampe, *God as Spirit*, pp. 18-19. Nevertheless, Lampe appreciates the strand of Irenaeus' thinking that describes human creation as a state of immaturity with potentialities to grow and develop. Lampe comments, "This picture suggests that creation is analogous to education, which is ideally a continuous interaction of minds with other minds, one human spirit with other human spirits. It is an analogy which cannot carry us far into the mystery of creation, but it points to God's creation of man as a developing interaction, according to man's capacity, of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man." Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 20.

¹⁰⁴ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 19.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17. Johnson makes a similar point. She speaks about the "person-creating" role of the Holy Spirit. See Johnson, *She Who Is*, pp. 125-126.

¹⁰⁶ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 22.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

location of the reign of God. Rather it speaks of God's continuous creativity both before and after Christ.¹⁰⁹ Hence, for Lampe, the Kingdom of God is synonymous with salvation.

So what is the soteriological relevance of Jesus? Lampe says "Jesus did not only announce the saving action of God; he himself was the agent by whom it was brought into effect" since in "Jesus God himself acted."¹¹⁰ Salvation "can be received only by way of repentance, in the full and proper sense of a reorientation of human personality so as to become open to God's love."¹¹¹ However, in Lampe's view, Jesus' soteriological significance does not make him God. "'Only God can save.' 'Jesus saves.' These are the premises of the Christological syllogism. Yet it is not enough simply to repeat the conclusion, 'therefore Jesus is God.'"¹¹² For Lampe, Jesus is God "adverbially." Because of the mutual interaction between God's Spirit and Jesus, Jesus acted divinely.

An interpretation of the union of Jesus with God in terms of his total possession by God's Spirit makes it possible, rather, to acknowledge him to be God 'adverbially.'

¹⁰⁹ Lampe observes that in the Jewish and early Christian understanding, the kingdom of God was seen as an intervention of God in history. The first century Judaism gave a political interpretation to the term. In the rabbinic literature, "it denotes the reign of God rather than the sphere over which he rules. It is linked with the expectation of the new order to be brought about by God in the age to come, because in the present age God's reign is opposed and obstructed by human disobedience; but it is, nevertheless, a present reality, for God rules through the Torah and men can experience his reign here and now by submitting to the yoke of the Law." Further, in Lampe's observation, the Old Testament and the New Testament offer a variety of meanings of the kingdom of God. But the different expressions of it are interchangeable and synonymous with salvation. In Isa 52:7,12 the reign of God means, "Good news, for it means the assurance that he will save his people." In Ps 103:19 God's reign suggests "blessing, for it brings mercy and righteousness." In Mic 4:7-8 God's reign means active presence of God in a human community consecrated to his service. In the New Testament, particularly in Luke 22: 29-30, Acts 1:6-8, Acts 28:31, Acts 14:22 the Kingdom of God is synonymous with the Gospel. Many parables of Jesus bring out different aspects of the Kingdom of God. Matthew's Sermon on the Mount summarises the features of the new life-style. In Matt. 12:28 and Luke 11:20, Jesus' words: 'If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has already come upon you' express that the kingdom of God is a present reality. In John 3: 3,5; 1:13 "to 'see' or 'enter' God's kingdom, the author implies, is to be born 'anew' or 'from above', 'not of "blood" nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' The kingdom of God is an essential relationship between God and humans and it is expressed as 'eternal life' in the Fourth Gospel. This is not a strange concept in the Synoptic Gospels, for in Lampe's view, Mark 10:17, 23, 25, 30, Luke 18:18, 24, 25,30 illustrate this point. And "the Pauline concepts of 'putting on Christ', living 'in Christ', 'sonship towards God', 'justification' and 'sanctification', 'reconciliation to God', 'living under grace', 'the indwelling of God's Spirit'" are various ways of speaking about the kingdom of God. The fruit of the Spirit in Rom 14:17 and Gal 5: 22-3 essentially speak of "the interaction of the Spirit of God with the spirits of men, creating human beings in God's image, reproducing in them the distinctive marks of Christlikeness." Lampe, *God as Spirit*, pp. 26-31.

¹¹⁰ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 14.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

By the mutual interaction of the Spirit's influence and the free response of the human spirit such a unity of will and operation was established that in all his action the human Jesus acted divinely.¹¹³

Nevertheless, the Christ-event is the focal point in the continuing creative activity of the Spirit. In the Christ-event God's Kingdom becomes a present reality. Christ not only proclaimed the Kingdom of God but also embodied it in his life and teachings, since his response to God was total and he had an unbroken relationship with God. Lampe presents Jesus as the second Adam. As the second Adam, Jesus represents the whole humanity. Jesus is both the "archetype of life in the Spirit" and "the source of its communication" to humanity. "Jesus became both the pattern of sonship and also the inspiration and power which can create in us a response, analogous to his own, to the Spirit of God that was in him and is in us. The interaction of divine Spirit with human spirit presents itself to us, and takes effect within us, in terms of the character, actions, and words of Jesus."¹¹⁴

The decisiveness of Jesus lies in the fact that the Christ-event was a turning point within this continuity. Christ brought the kingdom as a "present saving reality."¹¹⁵ Decisiveness does not mean that Jesus unravelled all the divine mysteries or answered all the questions of life. These belong to the "unfinished business of the Spirit" as the Spirit leads us into all truth. Decisiveness does not mean finality in the sense that we cannot revise or ought to share the beliefs Jesus and his contemporaries shared. He is decisive in that the process of divine creativity that "guides us on beyond him into truth is recognizable as the Spirit that was in him: the Christ-Spirit."¹¹⁶ It is for this Christ-Spirit that Lampe appeals and claims decisiveness.

¹¹³ Lampe, 'The Holy Spirit and the Person of Christ', p. 124.

¹¹⁴ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, pp. 24-25.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

In conclusion, we say that Lampe's pneumatological interpretation of the Christ–event in the framework of the mutual interaction between God as Spirit and the human spirit of Jesus is a significant contribution to Spirit Christology. But the difficulty with Lampe's proposal is his emphasis that Jesus is not substantially or adjectively God. Jesus is God “adverbially.” He mediates true God to humanity. Schoonenberg argues against Lampe's ‘adverbial presentation’:

... The Spirit is connected with Jesus not only functionally but also ontologically, because function is the expression of being and being includes function. Nor can Jesus be divine only ‘adverbially’, because ‘the human Jesus acting divinely’ also *is* divine by the Spirit's presence pervading him.¹¹⁷

But Del Colle thinks that in Lampe's proposal:

the subject of christological formulation is the man Jesus who mediates true God to man. Jesus is God adverbially (adverbial over against substantial; adverbial in contrast to adjectival). There was a mutual interaction between the Spirit and the human spirit of Jesus so that there was unity of will and operation between Jesus and God and thus Jesus' acts and words were divine words. ... This is a Spirit–christology of inspiration, indwelling and possession. Here there is a more genuine incarnation where God is truly god and Jesus is truly man. This view holds well to the Chalcedonian formula of ‘without confusion and without separation’ as well as Cyrill's notion of ‘one theandric energy.’ Since according to this view the Spirit pervades the whole life of Jesus this avoids the danger of adoptionism. The Spirit's indwelling in Jesus is not by human merit but by prevenient grace of God. Jesus is also considered as the ‘fount of grace’ because the Spirit present in him is available for the believers in their experience of salvation through the Christ–Spirit.¹¹⁸

This positive note rescues Lampe from Schoonenberg's criticism. Nevertheless, the difficulty with Lampe's proposal is that he dispenses with the idea of any *hypostatic* distinction in the Godhead and thereby the doctrine of Trinity. According to him, Christ cannot be understood without reference to ‘Spirit of God’ or ‘Holy Spirit.’ ‘God as Spirit’ and ‘presence of Christ’ are two different ways of speaking about the same reality. God the Spirit is now experienced as Christ. Without the present reality of the Spirit, Jesus

¹¹⁷ Piet J. A. M. Schoonenberg, ‘Spirit Christology and Logos Christology’, *Bijdragen*, 38 (1977), 350-375, (p. 365).

¹¹⁸ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 163.

would be a mere figure of the past in the background, available only for admiration. But at the same time the Spirit is not confined to Jesus.¹¹⁹ Jesus is central in the redemptive process but the redemptive process is not confined to the Christ–event.

This interpretation of Christ is possible for Lampe since he avoids any notion of the pre–existence of Christ. According to him, the concept of pre–existence not only eliminates Jesus’ free, autonomous response to God, but also makes it difficult to understand the authentic personal union of the divine will and the human will of Jesus while Jesus’ individuality and will remain distinct. The concept of pre–existence only leads to a “transformation of the sonship of Jesus from a relationship of love, trust, vocation, and obedience into a relationship between God the Father and his heavenly *Logos*–Son, and ultimately into an internal relation within the Godhead – the transmutation of the concept of ‘Son of God’ into that of ‘God the Son.’”¹²⁰

Hence, Lampe rejects the Trinitarian approach to God and holds on to the Unitarian view of God. Furthermore, he thinks that the notion the pre–existence of Christ gives rise to Trinitarian belief. The Spirit of God is active in creation and redemption. In fact, redemption is part of this divine creativity. In this continual process the Christ–event becomes a turning point revealing the perfection or complete unbroken communion between the divine Spirit and the human spirit. This is why the pre–existence of Christ and the deity of Christ do not hold much significance for Lampe. Thus, Lampe argues that we do not need a model of divine irruption since the Spirit is active continuously before Christ as well as after Christ. But Christ becomes our contemporary, present reality, as well as a

¹¹⁹ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 62.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

past historical character. This is because of the activity of the Spirit of God in him. So his emphasis is not on the pre-existence of Christ but rather on the Spirit of God.

The problem with the affirmation of the pre-existence of Christ for Lampe is firstly that it carries within it a notion that God immanent is in some way inferior to God transcendent.

Lampe explains,

As the pre-existent Son this mediator takes on personal form, conceived in what are really human terms, as God's representative agent in creation and salvation. His deeds are the acts of God, and his words are God's word to man; but the more concretely he is imagined as, in effect, a glorified human being who descends from heaven and returns to God, the more difficult it becomes actually to identify him with the real presence of God himself. As the Son, he is more than the mode of God's outreach towards the world. God's transcendence comes to be separated from his immanence, in a way that is almost analogous to the distinction between cause and effect.¹²¹

That is why Lampe would say that the term 'Spirit' is helpful, since it articulates the immanence and transcendence of God in the way both coexist in God.

Secondly, in his view, the New Testament writers, particularly Paul and John, failed to see the continuity between creation and redemption. They could not find a connecting link between the pre-existent Christ and the post-existent who is ascended, the risen Christ who is in heaven, who would come again. The missing link according to Lampe, is the experience of God as the Spirit. The presence of Christ is the same as the indwelling of the Spirit that the community formed by the life and teachings of Christ now seems to experience. If this identification is made, there is no need to affirm the concept of the substantial *hypostatization* of Christ, his ontological oneness with God and the mythological figure of God-Man descending down to earth.

¹²¹ Lampe, 'The Holy Spirit and the Person of Christ', p. 132.

Congar would argue concerning Paul's understanding of the Spirit and Christ that, in fact, Paul brings the glorified Christ and the Spirit together and thus could speak about Christ as the 'life-giving Spirit.'¹²² In Paul's writings, Lampe observes a functional identification of Christ and the Spirit.¹²³ In Lampe's view, both Paul and the author of the fourth gospel identify, though ambiguously, the Spirit with risen Christ and also distinguish Christ from the Spirit. In the fourth Gospel there is a close identification of Christ and Spirit; they are mutually interchangeable.¹²⁴ Each is understood by implication. The "'Spirit', understood as God communicating to men his self-revelation in Jesus, could not be experienced until the work of Jesus had been completed; and until the Spirit was present to mediate to men the present Christ it was impossible for them to understand the true significance of the words and deeds of the historical Jesus."¹²⁵ It is this mutuality that suggests *hypostatic* distinction and inevitably leads to the affirmation of the Trinity that Lampe wants to avoid, it is this mutuality we want to endorse.

Thirdly, the pre-existence of Christ is a problem for Lampe because, if Christ and the Spirit are considered to be coexistent beings, then it is difficult to assign a distinctive role to the Holy Spirit alongside the pre-existent and post-existent Christ. Consequently the

¹²² For Dunn, I Cor. 15:45 is central to such understanding. Here, "Jesus can be fully and adequately understood in terms of this Spirit . . . The exalted Lord seems to be wholly identified with the Spirit, the source of the new life experienced by believers." James D. G. Dunn, 'I Corinthians 15:45—Last Adam, Life-Giving Spirit', in *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament: Studies in Honour of Charles Francis Digby Moule*, ed. by Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 127-141, (p. 127). In Dunn's view, Paul's primary focus is the community's transforming experience of the life-giving Spirit into the likeness of Christ. Thus, resurrection gives Christ a representative significance. "Paul's own experience of the life of the Spirit bearing the imprint of Jesus' character and conforming him to that image is the ground on which Paul asserts the representative significance of Jesus' risen humanity." Dunn, 'I Corinthians 15:45—Last Adam, Life-Giving Spirit', p. 136.

¹²³ In Lampe's view, Rom 8: 9-10 illustrates this point. The terms Christ, the Spirit, in the Spirit, Christ in you, in Christ are identical for Paul. "Paul's functional identification of 'Christ' with 'Spirit' in many contexts, and his corporate or inclusive interpretation of 'Christ', suggest the possibility of using the concept of the indwelling, life-giving, presence of God as Spirit to articulate the real experience which underlies the puzzling and misleading affirmation, 'Jesus is alive today.'" Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 6.

¹²⁴ Lampe points out that in John 14:3,18 "Jesus' return is equated with the coming of the Spirit and with the indwelling of the disciples by God himself." He also refers to John 14:23, 16:13, 15:1-7, 7:39 to argue this point.

¹²⁵ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, pp. 7-8.

Spirit is not only interpreted in Christ terms but also given a third place in the hierarchy of God, playing a subordinate role in creation and redemption.

The Spirit is regarded, not as God experienced as Spirit and defined in 'Christ' terms, but as a second divine mediator between God the Father and his creatures. The reduction of the Spirit to a second, and very ill-defined, place in God's outreach towards the world could have been avoided if the term 'Spirit' had been allowed to express the totality of God in his creativity: in the whole process of his creative work which has its focus in Jesus Christ and continues now in believers.¹²⁶

While we appreciate Lampe's concern that the Spirit is defined in Christological terms rather than defined in its own terms, we argue that a linear understanding of the Spirit would preclude us from understanding the Spirit himself/herself since the Spirit by his or her nature cannot be stereotyped but only discerned in mutuality – a view which Lampe would be happy to endorse. This also affirms that the Spirit cannot be fixed in a unitarian mould.

Fourthly, Lampe argues that the affirmation of the pre-existent Christ involves a Trinitarian affirmation and along with this goes the whole difficulty of understanding the term 'person,' which for Lampe inevitably leads us to a tritheistic understanding of God, even with a substitute such as 'substantial relations' with which Aquinas preferred to speak of Trinitarian relations. Concepts such as paternity, filiation, procession, ingenerateness, generateness, spiration and so on make the discussion much more abstract.¹²⁷

Lampe points out the difficulties that are involved in using the term 'person.' Karl Rahner highlights the same point. But contemporary theologians in this area have done a great deal of study. Zizioulas' recovery of the meaning of 'person' from the early church theologians is very helpful here. Going back to the early church, Zizioulas reminds us that

¹²⁶ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, pp. 118-119.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-136.

communion for them is the basic or primordial ontological concept. The communion and love that they experienced in the church enabled them to interpret the being of God.¹²⁸ The being of God is known in personal communion and love. Being means life, and life means *communion*.¹²⁹ Trinity as communion does not lead to tritheism.

Fifthly, for Lampe the doctrine of pre-existence affirms that the divine *Logos* is the subject of the human experience of Jesus. Jesus' life in the Spirit, his commitment, humility, trust and his complete dedication – all these Lampe claims “are read back into the eternal relationship of the hypostatized and anthropomorphically conceived Logos–Wisdom to the Father.”¹³⁰ The following quotation from Lampe explains this point.

The perfect response of Jesus to God, expressed in his dedication to the doing of God's will, in his total obedience and trust, and supremely in his Gethsemane prayer to God as Father, is transposed into the inner being of the Godhead. God the Son is conceptualized as Jesus the Son of God; the obedience of Jesus, the servant and Son of God, the true Adam indwelt and inspired by God the Spirit, is attributed to God the Son; God the Son becomes eternally the subject of Jesus' self-dedication to his Father's will, and eternally the object of the Father's love which Jesus experienced so fully and communicated in turn to those who shared his own discipleship.¹³¹

For these reasons Lampe seems to think of pre-existence in terms of an idea or plan or pattern that exists eternally with God. Instead of the Trinity, he prefers to speak in monotheistic terms. He avoids any kind of *hypostatization* and shows this concern in presenting the creativity of the one God as Spirit. What Lampe appeals to is the community that emerged out of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ and which found the possibility of a new dimension to life, a new relationship with God. A relationship of Sonship towards God is possible. Eternal life can to some degree be a present possibility. “Repentance and remission of sins are concomitant aspects of the Christian ‘good news’,

¹²⁸ John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985), pp. 15-16.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹³⁰ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 137.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

rather than as cause and effect or condition and promise."¹³² It is this community, that emerged as a result of Jesus' life and work, that is instrumental for all people in identifying the Spirit of God with the Spirit of Christ. The community has a new consciousness. "... Christ's Spirit re-presents it in the lives of believers."¹³³ Christ's love, commitment, total dedication and obedience are seen in the re-presentation in those whom it has inspired. Hence, Lampe appeals for the community life that is lived in the power of the Spirit.

In the final analysis what counts for Lampe is neither the pre-existence nor the post-existence of Christ but the "experience of participation in Christ's sonship through sharing the Spirit that is 'let loose in the world'"¹³⁴ So, Lampe's theology is pneumatocentric in that displaces Christ and the Trinity from the centre.¹³⁵ It is here that Kilian McDonnell's words are worth noticing:

The doctrine of the Spirit is a methodological center, not a material center. If Jesus Christ is the 'what,' the Spirit is the 'how.' Because the invisible mission of the Son and that of the Spirit are coextensive and simultaneous, the Spirit is central, but not as displacing Christ from the center. Each occupies the center, each according to a proper function, even while the doctrine of Christ remains the content object of theological reflection. Such a framework is a guarantee against a contextless pneumatology and other strained misplacements.¹³⁶

¹³² Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 97.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

¹³⁵ Rosato in *The Spirit as Lord: The Pneumatology of Karl Barth*, shows that for Barth the Spirit plays a subjective role in making the objective revelation in Christ known to the people. Hence, Barth accepted the mystical element in the spiritual life but added that the Spirit always leads people to Jesus Christ. It is only in the Spirit that the finite and the infinite or God and human meet. For this reason Barth's theology is concerned with Jesus Christ rather than the redeeming acts of God. Barth argues for a pneumatology that is grounded in Christ. Spirit has an objective historical ground in Jesus. This is why Barth's quarrel with Schleiermacher is that he "tends to subsume the objective reality of Christ into the subjective experience of faith." Philip J. Rosato, *The Spirit as Lord: The Pneumatology of Karl Barth* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1981), p. 14. Barth's criticism of Schleiermacher holds true for the replacement models, which displace Christ for the Spirit. However, the strength of the replacement models is their emphasis on the encounter between divine Spirit and human spirit. This is not the case with Barth's pneumatology. "In order to give primacy to the mediating role of the Holy Spirit, Barth purposely downplays man's role in the process of divine-human mediation; not to do so is to sacrifice pneumatology to anthropology or to sacrifice Christ to a vague notion of the Spirit." Rosato, *The Spirit as Lord*, p. 21.

¹³⁶ McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' p. 215.

Lampe's special interest in pneumatology needs to be appreciated but, at the same time, it needs also to be acknowledged, as McIntyre reminds us, that a special interest in pneumatology in the early church gave way to talk about God in terms of the Trinity.¹³⁷

Likewise, Kilian McDonnell observes that the early church theologians spoke of the divinity of the Spirit because it was a Trinitarian issue.¹³⁸

For Lampe, the Spirit is the personal outreach of God. Lampe does not think that God as Spirit is an impersonal force or influence or energy or a third divine *hypostasis* of the Godhead,¹³⁹ nor is Spirit a bridge term linking the transcendent God with the realm of creation. God is a personal God who acts in creation and redemption. He argues against any restriction of the term Spirit to the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Trinity. He

¹³⁷ John McIntyre, 'The Holy Spirit in Greek Patristic Thought', *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 7 (1954), 353-375, (p. 353).

¹³⁸ McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' p. 203.

¹³⁹ Lampe states that Patristic theology, caught up in *hypostatizing Logos*, faced the problem of how this third divine *hypostasis* is related to the second, the *Logos*-Son-Christ. Also, how God the Holy Spirit is related to God the Father. It was affirmed that the Holy Spirit was divine, yet 'Holy Spirit' and 'God' are not interchangeable terms. It was then debated whether the Holy Spirit was begotten as the Father begot the Son. Athanasius and the Cappadocian Fathers held the Holy Spirit to be a creature. Lampe argues that this was counter to the Christian experience of the Spirit in action. On the other hand, the other position taken by fourth century theologians, that the Spirit is unbegotten, implied "that there are two divine hypostases whose being is underived, and hence, in effect, two 'First Persons'" and even the affirmation that "the Spirit is 'begotten' would suggest the existence of two 'Sons.'" In order to avoid such problems they chose to speak in terms of the Johannine expression of 'the procession of the Holy Spirit.' When Origen used it, he did not use it in order to solve the metaphysical problem of the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the first and second persons of the Trinity. In Eusebius' expression, it signified only the mission of the Spirit from the Father to the world. But later on, when the Johannine expression of procession of the Holy Spirit which was used to refer basically to the mission of the Spirit lifted up from its original context and the framework and used to solve the metaphysical problems posed difficulties. As to the question of how 'procession' differed from 'generation', many theologians including the Cappadocians left it open as a 'mystery of God.' But, had they realised that God as Spirit is not to be equated to the Holy Spirit; God as Spirit is creator, redeemer of human kind and inspirer and mover of all that exists, they would not have come to such an impasse. Their interpretation of God as Trinity would allow them to see God as Spirit reaching out to creation in every possible mode. The terms '*Logos*' and '*Spirit*' were no longer interchangeable. The Trinitarian affirmation led to the development of the separate doctrine of the Holy Spirit. However, the *hypostatization* of the Spirit followed the model of *hypostatization* of the *Logos*. Platonic thought dominated the theological framework of the early Church councils and it was difficult for monistic theologies to find a place in the theological system. Further, the whole debate on the *filioque* issue arose because of wrong exegesis of the text. The Son and the Spirit refer to the outreach of God's mission to the world, not a kind of metaphysical distinction in the Godhead. Lampe, *God as Spirit*, pp. 220-224.

argues that in the theology of the early Church, the Spirit had an ontological meaning rather than a functional meaning.¹⁴⁰

But the early church theologians were not unitarians, as we have mentioned above, rather they saw Spirit in a Trinitarian framework. The Holy Spirit is indivisibly united with the Father and the Son in divine activity. Apologists could distinguish between God as Spirit and the Spirit in the Godhead. Theophilus of Antioch uses the term 'triad' or 'Trinity' to refer to the Godhead. Athenagoras distinguishes between the Son and the Spirit in the Godhead. The Son is the Wisdom of the Father and the Spirit is effluence. According to Irenaeus, Son and Spirit are the two hands of the Father. Tertullian, Origen and Clement speak about the Son and the Spirit in Trinity.¹⁴¹ Athanasius in his refutation of the Tropici establishes a close relation between the Son and the Spirit. "What is spoken from God is said through Christ in the Spirit."¹⁴² Hence, for Athanasius "wherever God acts, in creation, in incarnation, in sanctification, there is present the Holy Spirit."¹⁴³ For Basil, "The Holy Spirit is inseparable and wholly incapable of being parted from the Father and the Son...in every operation."¹⁴⁴ Further, "Basil defines more precisely than did Athanasius the nature of God's creative activity; on the one hand, by distinguishing the

¹⁴⁰ Lampe says that many church Fathers like Athenagoras, Callistus, Eusebius, Gregory of Nyssa express the idea the essence of God is Spirit, that is what God is in himself. Tertullian prefers to speak of divine substance as Spirit and uses 'Word' to speak about divine activity. Hilary uses 'Spirit' to mean Christ's deity. For Origen, God is a dynamic and creative Spirit who relates himself to the world yet is transcendent from his creation. In Tatian's theology, Spirit acquires ontological and functional meaning. The Spirit is synonymous with the *Logos*. The Spirit is the deity of the *Logos*. In the theology of Theophilus, the Spirit, Wisdom and *Logos* are identical. In Irenaeus' theology, Spirit has a soteriological significance. The Spirit descends upon Jesus. This means that the Spirit is united with the human nature of Jesus in order to save us. Clement of Alexandria, again emphasising the soteriological significance of the Spirit, speaks about new creation. The Spirit leads human beings to God guiding them to attain true *gnosis* and liberating them from all earthly, disorderly passions and love to yield the fruit of the Spirit. Clement describes Christ as the Lord, Spirit and *Logos*. In the theology of Paul of Samosata one can observe the incarnational as well as inspirational Christology. He believed that Jesus was a man in whom God indwelt though he used the term *Logos* for this indwelling presence of God in Jesus. Lampe, *God as Spirit*, pp. 211-216.

¹⁴¹ Jean Laporte, 'The Holy Spirit, Source of Life and Activity According to the Early Church', in *Charismatic Renewal*, ed. by Edward D. O'Connor (London: SPCK, 1978), 57-99, (p. 64).

¹⁴² McIntyre, 'The Holy Spirit in Greek Patristic Thought', p. 356, citing, *ad Serapionem*. 1.14.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 356.

¹⁴⁴ McIntyre, 'The Holy Spirit in Greek Patristic Thought', p. 356, citing, *de Spiritu Sancto* 37.

original cause (the Father), the creative cause (the Son) and the perfecting cause (the Holy Spirit); and, on the other hand, by seeing in this joint creativity the pattern of their fellowship together."¹⁴⁵

Hence, unlike Lampe's proposal, in all these early church theologians the Spirit was understood in relation to the other persons of the Trinity. Along with this, Lampe fails to recognise another point: that for the early church theologians the Spirit is the distinct *hypostasis* in the Godhead. According to Gregory of Nazianzen, the Spirit himself is the self-existent Being in the Godhead, he also understands the whole Being of the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Spirit as Spirit.¹⁴⁶ Likewise, later on Calvin interpreted the whole Godhead as Spirit and the Holy Spirit himself as a distinct *hypostasis* in the Godhead. Thus, Calvin and Gregory taught that the Trinity is completely spiritual and the Holy Spirit is a distinct *hypostasis* in the Trinity.¹⁴⁷ The same view was held by Basil, Gregory Nyssen, Didymus, Epiphanius and others.¹⁴⁸ So the Holy Spirit acts from within the Trinity not from outside.¹⁴⁹ Lampe derives much from the early church theologians but does not seem to recognise these insights that come from them.

However, these difficulties notwithstanding, Lampe's vital contribution lies in his emphasis on the personal interaction between divine Spirit and human spirit. He emphasizes a personal union between the Spirit and Jesus. As we said earlier, this view holds well to the Chalcedonian formula of 'without confusion and without separation.'

Thus, Lampe, like other theologians of Spirit Christology contributes to us in giving this

¹⁴⁵ McIntyre, 'The Holy Spirit in Greek Patristic Thought', pp. 356-357, citing, *de Spiritu Sancto* 38.

¹⁴⁶ T. F. Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), p. 25, citing *Orations*, 31.

¹⁴⁷ Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement*, p. 25, citing Calvin, *Institutes*, I. 13, 14, 19ff.

¹⁴⁸ Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement*, p. 23.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

framework of the personal interaction between the divine Spirit and Jesus, to interpret the person and work of Christ.

Further, for Lampe, the personal interaction between the divine Spirit and the human spirit tells us something about the suffering of God. This is another vital contribution in the light of the difficulty that we encounter in classical theology with regard to the impassibility of God. If creation is not an external act of God but a process of free, creative interaction between the divine Spirit and human spirits, then God as Spirit cannot be impassible. Suffering is “inherent in his creativity.” Since persons have the capacity to accept or reject divine love, in their “repression, denial, rejection, and persecution of human love the Spirit of divine love cannot but suffer; and the loveless can be won over and transformed only by the love which they hate and blaspheme.”¹⁵⁰ God’s Spirit incarnates in human spirits, suffers in human spirits and his suffering love creates persons and leads them to wholeness. “If God the Spirit is always incarnate, he is always being crucified.”¹⁵¹ According to Lampe, creation itself is a continuous *kenosis* of God as Spirit. God as Spirit enters into personal interaction with every human being in their own situation awaiting a response from them. This speaks about the continual descent of God and the possibility of continual ascent of human beings to sonship to God and Christlikeness, who respond to God in love and freedom. The union of the divine and the human is made possible because of the continuous *kenosis* or self-emptying of God.

Lampe presents his concept of the continuous *kenosis* of God as Spirit in contrast to the traditional description of the ‘self-emptying’ pre-existent Son of God. The *kenosis* of the pre-existent Son of God is temporary for a brief period between his descent and ascent. It

¹⁵⁰ Lampe, *God as Spirit*, p. 21.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

is reduced to a single, unique event in history. Yet, Lampe observes, this traditional picture itself is incomplete. It does not say that the ascension of Christ is the end of divine *kenosis*. In this picture, the post-existent Christ is exalted and returned to his lost divine glory but the Spirit remains immanent in creation, participating in the struggles of human beings, interceding for them in their weaknesses on their behalf to God. This speaks about the continuous *kenosis* of the Holy Spirit. So Lampe sees a good reason to emphasise the continuous descent and ascent of God as Spirit. He says that the

mythological picture of *kenosis*, however, must be transferred to a much larger canvas. It depicts for us the Creator-Spirit's descent to the level of his human creatures, his age-long incarnation of himself in human personality, and the continuance of his suffering at the hands of his human creation until the ultimate accomplishment of his creative purpose for them.¹⁵²

However, as we have argued above, Lampe's Spirit Christology needs to avoid the automism of the Spirit and needs to recognise the otherness and particularity of the Spirit. As Gunton says "The relation of Jesus to the Spirit shows that the Spirit is portrayed as over against Jesus"¹⁵³ Further, as Gunton says, a "personal distinctness of the Spirit in relation to the Son and the Father" needs also to be emphasised in our reflection on the Spirit.¹⁵⁴ Had Lampe seen the mutual interaction between the Spirit and Christ with interest and keenness, he would have avoided the unitarian tendency in theology and maintained Trinitarian interaction and thus a Trinitarian basis for Christology.

¹⁵² Lampe, *God as Spirit*, pp. 209-210.

¹⁵³ Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, p. 131.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

2.3.3 The Complementary Approach

2.3.3.1 Jürgen Moltmann: Incarnation from the Perspective of Resurrection

Jürgen Moltmann claims that the church's deep concern to show that Jesus is essentially, substantially one with the Father and that he is from the very beginning the Son of God can be presented from the perspective of the Spirit. In *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions* he claims that his interpretation of Christ from the perspective of the Spirit is not in contradiction to the Christological dogma of Nicaea and Chalcedon, but rather an attempt to "contemplate in wonder the God who has become human, and the human Christ who is deified."¹⁵⁵

He argues that classical Christology works with the anthropological conception of its time in order to explain the constitution of Jesus Christ and soteriology. The general metaphysical framework of the God-human relationship is used to explain the constitution of Christ.¹⁵⁶ The relation between divine and human natures in Christ is likened to the relationship between creator and the creature rather than the relationship between the Father and the Son. So incarnational Christology is not drawn from the particular history of Jesus himself.¹⁵⁷

Moltmann further argues that the Eternal *Logos* assuming a non-personal human nature means that the incarnation itself is the assumption of a "de-humanised, de-personalized" human being. Or it would mean that 'true' human nature itself *anhypostatically* *anhypostatized* in the divine person."¹⁵⁸ It implies that Christ's human nature like his

¹⁵⁵ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1990), p. xiii.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-48.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

divine nature is immortal and what is immortal is never born or dies.¹⁵⁹ Therefore, if Christ's human nature is immortal and cannot succumb to death, how could he save humanity by suffering on the cross? Hence, inevitably, the two-nature Christology emphasises Christ's divine nature not his human characteristics, Christ's exaltation not his humiliation, his eternal history not his human history. The history of Christ is interpreted vertically. It is about the Son of God coming down to earth and returning home.¹⁶⁰ "The theme of this truncated Christology became the person of the divine human being who came into the world to save sinners."¹⁶¹ Consequently, the descent and the ascent of the redeemer figure of incarnational Christology missed the horizontal history of Spirit forming and shaping the birth, life and mission of Jesus.

Jesus' history begins with the Holy Spirit. It is impossible to talk about Christ without at the same time speaking about the Spirit in him. Jesus had a unique relationship with the Spirit from his birth. The Spirit engendered Jesus' birth. Jesus had a unique experience of the Spirit at his baptism: His experience at baptism was not the forgiveness of sins but the experience of the Spirit, in which the Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove.

This condescending of the Spirit or the *kenosis* of the Spirit (the self-emptying of the Spirit in descending upon Jesus) speaks about the divine commitment to Jesus in which Jesus himself finds his identity. In the Spirit Jesus perceives his sonship to the Father. In his *abba* experience, he experiences that he is the Son of the Father and the Father experiences

¹⁵⁹ Moltmann argues: "Here the image of the body of Christ which is 'transfigured' through the raising from the dead (Phil. 3.21) and which Rom. 6.9 says 'will never die again' is evidently projected back to the birth of his body from the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ's human bodiliness is then already transfigured through the virgin birth. But this is an impossible possibility, because it is then impossible to talk even symbolically about wither a 'virgin' or 'a birth'. Both the divine personal centre and the inherently immortal body of Christ must then be pre-existent and must have entered into Mary out of eternity." Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, pp. 51-52.

¹⁶⁰ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 52.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Jesus as his Son. The Spirit causes this “person–forming element in the mutuality of Jesus and God.”¹⁶² In other words, “the Spirit is the real determining subject of this special relationship of Jesus to God, and of God to Jesus.”¹⁶³

The Spirit led Jesus throughout his life and enabled him to overcome temptations. It was in the power of the Spirit that he brought healing to the sick and liberated the poor and the oppressed. The Spirit was given to Jesus “without measure” (John 3:34) and “*in the power of the Spirit*” he performed his mission. The Spirit makes Jesus “the kingdom of God in person.”¹⁶⁴ Jesus was the bearer of the Spirit not for his own sake but for the sake of the community. This corporate aspect is the unique feature of Spirit Christology, that is it constitutes Jesus as a social person.¹⁶⁵ Traditional Christology focuses on the divine person or divine Sonship rather than on Jesus’ historical personality. Moltmann’s interest is to look at the ‘social’ person of Jesus. Jesus’ personhood neither existed in isolation nor was it fixed from eternity. Unlike the traditional Christologies in which the “*metaphysical concepts of nature* or essence are used to elucidate the constitution of the divine–human person of Christ”, here Jesus’ personhood “acquires its form in living relationships and reciprocities, and becomes an open identity in the course of Jesus’ history.”¹⁶⁶ The traditional Christologies explicate Jesus’ divinity and humanity “by way of mutual negations of the characteristics of the other: finite–infinite, mortal–immortal, passible–impassible, and so forth,”¹⁶⁷ but Jesus the bearer of the Spirit obtained his personhood by way of mutual reciprocity and interaction with people as he was led by the Spirit.

¹⁶² Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 92.

¹⁶³ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1999), p. 61.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 94.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Jesus himself “grows into the One whom he will be, God’s messiah” and “the divine power of healing does not come from his side alone. Nor is it simply his own ‘ministry,’ as and when he wishes to perform it. It is rather something that happens between him and the people who seek this power in him, and importune him.”¹⁶⁸ Christ is dynamic and not the static Christ of orthodoxy. Thus, Moltmann emphasises the unity between Christology and soteriology. Christology provides the “inner premise for the soteriology” and soteriology is the “outward result of Christology.”¹⁶⁹ Salvation is holistic, that is it touches all parts of human life. Salvation is for the *totus homo*. Jesus proclaims liberty to the captive, good news to the poor, heals the sick and demon possessed. Salvation is the “summing-up of all the healings.”¹⁷⁰ Salvation is an anticipation of new life. The Spirit bound with Jesus brings new reality to the poor.¹⁷¹ Moltmann says that Jesus’ ministry can be well understood in his relationship with the poor, the sick, with women and the marginalised. Jesus did not die as a private person but died as a brother and head of the community of the least and down-trodden.¹⁷²

And it is through the Spirit that Jesus surrendered himself to death. The theme of *kenosis* of the Spirit runs through the Spirit Christology of Moltmann. The Spirit participates in

¹⁶⁸ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 111.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁷⁰ Moltmann states that there is a relationship between salvation and healing. Healing relieves a person from sickness and pain. Salvation is annihilation of death itself. Salvation is the hope of resurrection. “Healings and salvation are related to one another in such a way that the healings are signs, this side of death, of God’s power of resurrection or, as John says, signs of Christ’s ‘glory’; while salvation is the fulfilment of these prefigured real promises in the raising of the dead to eternal life. Just as healing overcomes sickness, so salvation overcomes death.” Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 108.

¹⁷¹ In Moltmann’s view, “The collective term ‘the poor’ covers the hungry, the unemployed, the sick, the discouraged, and the sad and suffering. The poor are sick, crippled, homeless (Luke 14. 21-23). They are the beggars in the streets and on the country roads (Matt. 11.2-5). They are the sad (Luke 6.21). Their external situation is described with sufficient clarity: people want to take their very undergarment in pledge (Matt. 5.40). They are held liable for their debts to the extent of their own bodies (Luke 12.58) and their families (Matt. 18. 23-35). Often enough they have to accept slavery and prostitution—which means a total loss of all their rights. The poor are ‘non-persons’, ‘sub-human’, ‘dehumanized’, ‘human fodder.’” Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 99.

¹⁷² Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 71.

Jesus' weakness, suffering and death and binds himself with the destiny of Jesus.¹⁷³ Jesus' *abba* Father in Gethsemane (Mk 14:32-42) is a response in the Spirit to the call at his baptism by the Father 'my beloved Son.' This pneumatological interpretation of Jesus' passion shows the Spirit's condescension and the *kenosis* of the Spirit. If Jesus lives, ministers, suffers and dies in the Spirit, this implies that the history of Jesus is the history of the Spirit.¹⁷⁴ That the Spirit rested upon him means that the Spirit accompanies him all through his life. The Spirit is his companion in suffering.¹⁷⁵ The descent of the Spirit and the resting of the Spirit in Jesus is God's *Shekinah*. As the *Shekinah* went with the people of Israel into the exile, the Spirit accompanies Jesus in his suffering. The suffering of Christ is the "*self-restriction and self-humiliation of the eternal Spirit...*".¹⁷⁶ Through the *Shekinah* the Spirit, without becoming identical with him, binds itself to Jesus' suffering.¹⁷⁷

It was the Holy Spirit through whom Jesus proclaimed with authority, and performed signs and wonders; but the Spirit who was Jesus' active power now becomes his suffering power. The One who sent him in power to the poor, to bring them the kingdom of God, made himself poor, in order that through his sufferings the poor might be made rich (II Cor. 8.9). The sufferings of Christ are also the sufferings of the Spirit, for the surrender of Christ also manifested the self-emptying of the Spirit. The Spirit is the divine subject of Jesus' life-history; and the Spirit is the divine subject of Jesus' passion history. This means we must even add that Jesus suffered death in 'the power of indestructible life' (Heb. 7.16). And through this power 'of the eternal Spirit' (9.14) in his death destroyed death. Consequently, through the slain Christ, indestructible life is opened up to all the dying.¹⁷⁸

But the Spirit suffers differently; the Spirit does not die since the Spirit is life and the giver of life. "The Spirit is the transcendent side of Jesus' immanent way of suffering. So the Spirit is 'condescendence' with Jesus."¹⁷⁹ The Spirit is power in weakness; the Spirit

¹⁷³ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 93.

¹⁷⁴ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 64.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹⁷⁸ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 174.

¹⁷⁹ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 62.

intercedes for Jesus in his weakness with inexpressible groanings. The Spirit's suffering along with Jesus confirms life beyond death so that God overcomes death and becomes "all in all."¹⁸⁰ It was by the power of the Spirit that Jesus was raised from the dead. The belief that the Spirit raised Jesus from the dead is significant for Moltmann since resurrection is the vantage point from which he looks at the whole history of Jesus and his origin. He writes,

... the raising did not merely happen *synchronously* to the dead Jesus; it also happened *diachronically* to the whole Jesus in all the moments and aspects of his life and proclamation. That is why he is present in the power of the Spirit, not merely in his last moment on the cross but in all his moments from birth onwards. He is raised and present in the Spirit, not only as the one crucified, but also as the one baptized, as the healer, the preacher on the mount, the friend of sinners and tax-collectors, and the one whom the women accompanied to the moment of his death.¹⁸¹

Christ's origin is revealed and affirmed in the resurrection. The Easter event prompts us to recognise Jesus as the Christ, the One who was with God from the beginning. He was the eternal Son of God. "In the light of the resurrection' his past history is not merely made present and retrospectively interpreted; he himself is manifested in this past history in the light of his present future."¹⁸² This way of seeing Jesus' eternal relationship with the Father does not necessitate an emphasis on the idea of the virgin birth of Jesus. The whole process, Jesus' birth, life, mission, death, resurrection and exaltation can be seen as the work of the Holy Spirit. The Gospels present Jesus' past, present and future life in such a way that all three are related. The past Jesus is present as the risen one in the Spirit. In the Spirit, Jesus is present in the church, community, in the eucharist and in the Word. "This Spirit history of Jesus: the coming, the presence, and the efficacy of the Spirit in, through and with Jesus, is the hidden beginning of the new creation of the world."¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God* (London: SCM, 1974), p. 277.

¹⁸¹ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 76.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

Resurrection is a Trinitarian act. The resurrected Christ is present in the Spirit. He is the life-giving Spirit. Resurrection points to a qualitatively new state of life. It is not a breach with the past but a transition and a new beginning. Metaphors such as wheat dying and becoming life (John 12:24) and woman's labour and new life (John 16:20-22) show a transition not a break from the past. And Christ is the first fruits of new creation.¹⁸⁴

Moltmann writes, "Raising from the dead is an eschatological act of God performed on Jesus, and in so far it is something new; but it also reveals the truth about the earthly Jesus. It endorses and fulfils his messianic claim. It endorses and fulfils his divine Sonship."¹⁸⁵ God raised him from the dead means that "Christians believe in God for Jesus' sake, and in Jesus for God's sake."¹⁸⁶ And "they perceive that not only Jesus is 'theo-form'; but also God is 'christo-form.'"¹⁸⁷ Thus, Moltmann claims that this way of thinking offers a Trinitarian foundation for Spirit Christology.

Moltmann emphasises the point that Spirit Christology is not in opposition to or an alternative to incarnation Christology but rather it sets Christology in a Trinitarian framework.

Spirit christology is not set up in opposition to incarnation christology, for every doctrine of the incarnation begins with the statement 'conceived by the Holy Spirit'. Nor is Spirit christology levelled at the doctrine of the two natures. But it does make it possible to absorb the exclusive christomonism of a christology of the God-human being into the fullness of trinitarian christology, with its wealth of relationships.¹⁸⁸

Moltmann also argues that in Spirit Christology Jesus' divinity and humanity are not set at two opposite poles. Instead, we understand his divinity through his humanity and his

¹⁸⁴ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 249.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

humanity through his divinity. If this dialectical perception is lost then we will end up either in theological Christology without Jesus or with an anthropological Jesuology without God. Hence, he says that we need to abandon the phrases Christology 'from above' and Christology 'from below':

The distinction 'from above' and 'from below' is in fact both superficial and misleading, because to know Jesus Christ practically and specifically can only be a matter of dialectical conditions: Jesus is known as the Christ of God for the sake of the God of promise, and in this process God is known as the Father of Jesus Christ for Jesus' sake. The nature and attributes of this God of Jesus Christ are therefore discerned from the history of Christ, from his passion and his raising from the dead; they cannot be perceived and premised from any other source. The same may be said about the knowledge of Jesus Christ's humanity and divinity: the earthly, human, and therefore historically knowable Christ is remembered and known in the light of his resurrection from the dead and his presence in the Spirit of God; and the raised and present Christ is perceived and known in the light of what was remembered and passed on about the life he lived. If this were not so, Jesus could not be identified with the Christ at all, or the Christ with Jesus. Here, too, it is not a question of an alternative, but only of a dialectical perception of the mystery of Jesus Christ by way of remembrance, hope and experience.¹⁸⁹

Thus, Moltmann sees Spirit Christology enhancing *Logos* Christology by bringing the Spirit dimension into Christology. *Logos* Christology and Spirit Christology, descent and ascent, Christology from above and Christology from below, need each other for a fuller understanding of the person and work of Christ.

In conclusion, we can say that the positive aspects of Moltmann's Spirit Christology are, firstly, that he provides a methodological starting point for interpreting the origin of Jesus. Christ's resurrection manifests his origin. Eschatological revelation discloses that Jesus is essentially and substantially one with the Father, which the classical theology laboured to prove. The ascension proves the descent. Therefore, we do not have to begin with the pre-existent Son in order to say that Jesus is the eternal Son of God. Such a starting point would offer a Trinitarian basis for Christology. As Moltmann says, "The historical

¹⁸⁹ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 69.

account of his life is from the very beginning a theological account, or it is determined by his collaboration – his coinstrumentality – with the Spirit and ‘the Father.’”¹⁹⁰ Speaking only about Jesus’ relationship with God would mean simplifying the complex dimensions of his relationship with the Father and the Spirit. However, “[the] Being of Jesus Christ is from the very outset a Being–in–relationship, and where his actions are from the very beginning interactions, and his efficacies co–efficacies.”¹⁹¹

Further, Christ’s presence in the Spirit in the community proves his being in the Spirit from the beginning. If he lives in the Spirit, this means that he has come by the Spirit. Then the history of Christ is also the history of the Spirit within him. Jesus’ Sonship to God is defined pneumatologically. “There was no time and no period of his life when Jesus was not filled with the Holy Spirit.”¹⁹² Hence, there is no alternative between adoptionist and incarnational Christology.

The experience of the Spirit evidently provides a differently supported logic of correspondence between the experience of Christ’s presence and the remembrance of his history. If Christ is present now in the eternal Spirit of God, then his history must have been determined by this Spirit from the very beginning.¹⁹³

Secondly, his emphasis on Jesus as a social person is helpful in the light of the difficulties involved in speaking of Jesus in terms of two natures. Christ is “a forward movement of God’s history with the world” not a static Christ as a person in two natures. Moltmann’s aim is to complement high Christology with reflection on the humanity of Christ. This way of looking at Jesus’ personhood also gives a different picture of his mission. The mission of Jesus is not something pre–determined but it is discerned in the interplay

¹⁹⁰ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 74.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 81.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

between Jesus and the people. "The gospel does not merely *bring* the kingdom of God to the poor; it also *discovers* the kingdom of the poor..."¹⁹⁴

Thirdly, Moltmann's strength lies in his answer to the classical notion of the impassibility of God. Over and against divine *apatheia*, Moltmann stresses divine pathos. Moltmann's emphasis is that the Cross reveals the nature of God. It is not merely the suffering of Christ but suffering in God.¹⁹⁵ Moltmann's profound claim is that Christ's death is not isolated from the other persons of Trinity. It is the suffering of the whole Godhead. In the suffering and death of the Son, both Father and Son suffer but differently. The Son suffers the abandonment of the Father and the Father suffers the pain of the death of the Son.¹⁹⁶ And in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ the Spirit is involved in division and conjunction between the Father and the Son.¹⁹⁷ "The Holy Spirit is bound in the division, forging the link between the originally lived unity, and the division between the Father and the Son experienced on the cross."¹⁹⁸ In contrast to the immutable and changeless God of classical theology, Moltmann presents the suffering Trinity, the self-giving and suffering God who undergoes the pains of redemption in order to bring forth a new creation.

¹⁹⁴ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 100.

¹⁹⁵ Barth does not think like Moltmann that suffering is in God since for him God is perfect and suffering cannot change his perfection. It is here Hans Urs von Balthasar too differs from Barth. Balthasar believes that the cross event affects God and enriches God. God becomes 'even more' of the same. John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 47.

¹⁹⁶ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 173.

¹⁹⁷ Similarly according to Wong, the cross is the event, which reveals the radical separation and profound union in the separation between Father and the Son. The Father gives up his Son for the sake of humanity (Rom 8:32). This reveals the love of God (Jn 3:16; Gal 2:20; Eph 5:2). The Son gives himself up (Gal 2:20 and Eph 5:2). The spirit is the love of God in person unites the Father and the Son in their separation. Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', pp. 70-71.

¹⁹⁸ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 174.

2.3.3.2 John D. Zizioulas: The Pneumatic Constitution of Christ

The Greek Orthodox theologian Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) of Pergamon, in *Being as Communion: Studies in personhood and the Church*, argues for a synthesis of Christology and pneumatology. Zizioulas' study of Christology and pneumatology has to be seen alongside his interest in dealing with some of the issues relating to Orthodox ecclesiology. Zizioulas presents the Orthodox criticism in general of the teachings of Vatican II concerning the role of the Spirit in ecclesiology. He says, "in comparison with Christology, pneumatology did not play an important role in the council's teaching on the Church. More particularly, it was observed that the Holy Spirit was brought into ecclesiology after the edifice of the Church was constructed with Christological material alone. This, of course, had important consequences for the teaching of the council on such matters as the sacraments, ministry and ecclesial institutions in general."¹⁹⁹ In Zizioulas' view, the main reason for this is the lack of synthesis between Christology and pneumatology.²⁰⁰

He points out that some Orthodox theologians, for example Vladimir Lossky, although they attempt to integrate Christology and pneumatology, make a sharp distinction between the economy of the Son and that of the Spirit. The work of the Son is seen in terms of salvation and the work of the Spirit is seen in deification. Zizioulas thinks that the task of the Orthodox theology today is to bring the two economies together.²⁰¹ In his view, Christology cannot be treated as an autonomous subject. His plea is that we need to avoid Christomonistic tendencies in our understanding of the person and work of Christ. Christology has to be studied in a broader framework of Trinitarian theology and ecclesiology. Going back to the early church, Zizioulas reflects that the communion for

¹⁹⁹ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 123.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 125-126.

them is the basic primordial ontological concept. The eucharistic experience is a cornerstone in Zizioulas' theology for the understanding of every other doctrine. It is from the standpoint of the eucharist that he interprets the Being of God, Christology, ecclesiology, anthropology and soteriology.

He points out that the main contribution of the pastoral theologians of the early church such as Irenaeus, Ignatius of Antioch and Athanasius was that they interpreted God, on the basis of their experience of church as community. The Church as Eucharistic communion is not merely an institution. Rather, the church expresses communion as the mode of its being or existence.²⁰² Actualisation of life happens in communion. The eucharist is not merely "an objective act or a 'means of grace' 'used' or 'administered' by the Church."²⁰³ In other words, the eucharist is not merely a sacrament. The eucharist is communion; it is a happening, a gathering of people. Zizioulas says, "This experience revealed something very important: the being of God could be known only through personal relationships and personal love. Being means life, and life means *communion*."²⁰⁴

According to Zizioulas, the important contribution of the Cappadocians was to affirm that the cause of this communion is the Father and that the Father is neither an impersonal substance nor a structure but a person.²⁰⁵ The Father is communion and love. The Godhead derives such freedom and communion from the Father. The unity of God exists in the *hypostasis* of the Father. The *hypostasis* of the Father is the cause of one divine substance or one God. There is no divine substance without the Trinity.²⁰⁶ Substance does not exist without *hypostasis*. So, God 'exists' on account of a person, the Father, and not

²⁰² Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 15.

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 16.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 17-18.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 41.

on account of a substance.”²⁰⁷ Love is God’s mode of existence. Love constitutes or *hypostatizes* God’s being.²⁰⁸

As God exists in communion, so the church is communion. As love unites the three persons of the Trinity in a communion of love, so the church is a communion of love. In this way, ecclesiology and theology are closely bound together. In this sense, truth is life and truth is communion. Truth is not merely an intellectual activity.²⁰⁹ Truth is communion both in the biblical sense and in the tradition of the Greek Fathers. The experience of Eucharistic communion enabled early church theologians to identify truth with life. This is very significant for Zizioulas not only in speaking about truth as life but also in speaking about Christ as truth. Therefore, his criticism of *Logos* Christology is that it does not state the relationship between the historical Christ and truth. If the incarnation is merely a revelation of pre-existing truth, how can the historical Christ be the truth? In other words, it raises a question about the relationship between revelation and history.²¹⁰

Zizioulas gives a brief summary of the different early church theologians’ approach to truth during the patristic age. The Greek Apologists, particularly Justin and the Alexandrians, Clement and notably Origen, attempted to bring together the Greek idea of truth²¹¹ and the Christian claim that Christ is truth with the aid of the *Logos* concept. Philo first used the *Logos* concept. He combined Greek cosmology and the biblical account of creation by stating that the world was created by the *Logos* of God. Following this idea and on the basis of the prologue to the fourth Gospel, Justin affirmed that Christ is truth.

²⁰⁷ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 42.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

²¹¹ Truth for the Greeks is linked with cosmology. Greeks sought truth not in history but in a way which transcends history. The monistic philosophy of Greek, which posited a closed ontology where history and matter are seen to be in conformity to One Ultimate Reality or else they fall from existence. Hence, the Greek mind sought truth in a way that transcends history. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 68-72.

In Justin's construal, God, the ultimate truth, is the same unchanging One who is the cause of all intelligent beings and who relates to the world through the mind (*nous*). The problem in this attempt is that there is an identification of truth with intelligence and error with the senses and body. This creates an unavoidable dualism between things of the senses and of the intellect and also *nous* becomes the ontologically necessary link between God and human beings. When this is interpreted Christologically, Christ the *Logos* becomes the link between God and world and a link between truth and mind.²¹²

In Origen's view, God would be powerless without creation. So the omnipotence of God necessitates eternal creation. Consequently, and similar to Greek understanding, God and creation are one unbreakable, organic unity.²¹³ In his view, truth has been "*directly imprinted by God*" or "actualized by God" in the eternal creation of God. So, truth is not actualised by any intermediary. Hence, Jesus Christ cannot be an intermediary of truth.²¹⁴ "Christ is the truth' is to say 'the truth is Christ', since the historical Christ appears to be the truth precisely because of his participation in truth, being the *logos* of creation—not because he is Jesus of Nazareth."²¹⁵ All this leads up to the assertion that Christ is truth itself but not because of his humanity.

Thus the *Logos* approach attempts to understand truth in terms of cosmology. But there is another approach that sees truth in terms of life. As we have explained earlier, for the early church theologians, St Ignatius for example, truth is connected with life. Likewise, for Irenaeus Christ is the "*incorruptibility of being*."²¹⁶ But this identification of being with life by the Greek Fathers comes from their experience of the church as eucharistic

²¹² Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 73-74.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

community.²¹⁷ The fourth Gospel provided them with sufficient resources to see the link between truth and life, for in this Gospel, knowledge is spoken of in terms of 'eternal life' or 'true life.'²¹⁸

Both Ignatius and Irenaeus spoke of the eucharist as truly Christ both in the "historical and material sense."²¹⁹ Here, truth becomes "historical without ceasing to be ontological."²²⁰ Contrary to the *Logos* approach to truth which attempted to understand truth in terms of cosmology, here "Christ is the truth not because he is an epistemological principle which explains the universe, but because he is life..."²²¹ It is in this perception that the ontological nature of truth becomes explicit. "Truth resides in the idea of life."²²² The idea of truth leads us ultimately not to "the 'nature' of things, as with the Greeks, but to life and communion of beings."²²³ Communion is not something added to being, but being is constituted as communion.²²⁴ Unlike the Greek understanding of truth, here truth and history are connected. Christ is truth and thus truth has acquired a historical character unlike the *Logos* approach in which Christ is truth not because of his humanity but because of being *Logos*.²²⁵ All creation is in Christ. History finds its foundation in Christ. Christ becomes the beginning and end of all things. In Christ, the end of history is present here

²¹⁷ Zizioulas points out that to the Greek mind, for example in Aristotle's philosophy "life is a quality added to being, and not being itself." A living being has or possesses life in contrast to the non-living things, which exist. Though a non-living thing 'is' it does not 'have' life. Life is possessed by a living being. Hence, life is possessed and does not precede being. Therefore, "truth as the meaning of being relates ultimately to being as such, and not to life." But then, "if a Greek mind was unable to say in the same breath "being and life," the Christian had to say both at once." This is precisely done by the early church theologians because of their experience of the church which is basically a eucharistic community for them. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 79.

²¹⁸ Jn 3:15,36; 14:6; 17:3.

²¹⁹ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 81.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid., p. 80.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid., p. 94.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 101.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 76.

and now.²²⁶ In this sense, "Christ makes history into truth and truth into part of unfolding of history."²²⁷

Christ is the truth means that Christ is the saviour. The statement that Christ is the saviour and Christ's own claim that he is the truth and the life of the world have ontological implications.²²⁸ That truth is life means that truth overcomes the fragmentations of finite existence and death. Authentic life overcomes death. Therefore, human sin seen from the ontological point of view is "*the refusal to make being dependent on communion.*"²²⁹ It is an assertion that the truth of being has priority over the truth of communion. It is the assertion that being precedes relationship. Death is the consequence of this individualization of ontology. The Fall also creates a dichotomy between love and knowledge. In the fallen state knowledge precedes love and truth precedes communion.

This dichotomy between love and knowledge implies a separation not just between person and nature, but also between thought and action in the very heart of human existence. And since the possibility of knowledge appears to precede the act of communion (love) and to be independent of it, it becomes possible for man to dissociate his thought from his action and thus to falsify truth. Man thus becomes a *hypocrite*, and it is indeed only man, i.e., a person, that is capable of hypocrisy.²³⁰

Salvation is eternal life. This is possible when the meaning of person is realised and appropriated. To be a person means to be in communion and truth is communion and

²²⁶ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 70-71.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

²²⁸ According to Congar, "In the inspired Johannine synthesis, the truth goes from God to God, passing through the incarnate Word and the people of God. God the Father is true, authentic, stable in his very being. His eternal Word is true because it is his Word. It became flesh in Jesus Christ and was communicated to men through him and his Spirit. By receiving and keeping the Word and the Spirit, we can walk (2 Jn 4; 2 Jn 3 and 4), have grace and truth (2 Jn 1-3), love (1 Jn 3:18), be consecrated (Jn 17:17,19), worship (4.23) and be free (8:32) in truth or in the truth. We can, in a word, live truly." Yves Congar, *The Word and the Spirit*, trans. by David Smith (London: Chapman, 1986), p. 46.

²²⁹ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 102.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

Christ is the truth. Salvation is possible only through Christ because in Christ “being and communion coincide” and thus he is “ontologically *true*.”²³¹

When Christ says He is the truth and at the same time the life of the world. He introduces into truth a content carrying ontological implications. The truth saves the world because truth is life. The Christological mystery, as declared by the Chalcedonian definition, signifies that salvation as truth and life is possible only in and through a person who is ontologically *true*, i.e. something which creation cannot offer, as we have seen. The only way for a true person to exist is for being and communion to coincide. The triune God offers in himself the only possibility for such an identification of being with communion; He is the revelation of true personhood.²³²

Hence, regeneration or rebirth means being rooted in the ontological reality of Christ.

Christ fulfils the human quest for the authentic personhood. “He realizes in history *the very reality of the person* and makes it the basis and “hypostasis” of the person for every man.”²³³ Christ’s resurrection shows that true life survives death and creaturely finitude. “Truth and being are existentially identified only in Christ’s resurrection, where freedom is no longer fallen, i.e. no longer a threat to being.”²³⁴ Hence, the meaning of baptism is the identification of human *hypostasis* with the *hypostasis* of Christ. The resurrection aspect of baptism implies personhood and communion. It is “*incorporation into the community*.”²³⁵

Christology is the “proclamation to man that his nature can be ‘assumed’ and hypostatized in a manner free from the ontological necessity of his biological hypostasis, which ... leads to the tragedy of individualism and Death.”²³⁶ And “salvation through the truth thus depends in the last resort upon the identification of truth with communion.”²³⁷ Thus the

²³¹ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 107.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid., p. 56.

²³⁴ Ibid., p. 108.

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 113.

²³⁶ Ibid., p. 56.

²³⁷ Ibid., p. 105.

incarnate Christ, the truth, is the saviour since he leads created beings towards true life and into the communion of God, for incorruptibility is possible for creation only in and through communion with the life of God.²³⁸ But the question that Zizioulas raises is “How can man, and creation in general, be connected with this individual existentially, i.e. not just psychologically or morally, but ontologically?”²³⁹ For him, the solution lies in relating Christology with pneumatology.

For Zizioulas there are two ways of understanding Christ: namely Christ as an individual and Christ as person. Christ as an objective, historical individual presents himself through many means such as scripture and tradition under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Here the Spirit intervenes “*a posteriori* within the framework of Christology, as a help in overcoming the distance between an objectively existing Christ and ourselves” but Christ as a person is “*constituted* pneumatologically.”²⁴⁰ Such a Christology has a biblical basis. The Spirit constitutes Christ’s life right from conception.²⁴¹ “Christ becomes a historical person only *in the Spirit* (Matt. 1.18-20; Luke 1.35).”²⁴² The Holy Spirit gives birth to Christ and his saving activity. The Spirit makes Jesus *Christos* by anointing him (Luke 4:13). It is possible to confess Christ as truth only in the Spirit (I Cor 12:3).²⁴³ Thus, the foundation of Christology is pneumatology.

Zizioulas, in accordance with the theory that the external activities of God are indivisible yet each person’s operation is distinctive, states that the incarnation is a Trinitarian event. “Both the Father and the Spirit are involved in history, but only the Son *becomes*

²³⁸ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 82.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

²⁴¹ Matt 1.18-20; Luke 1.35.

²⁴² Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 111.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

history.”²⁴⁴ He says that, if we introduce time into history, both the Father and the Spirit would be excluded from this economy. “To be involved in history is not the same as to *become* history. The economy therefore, in so far as it assumed history and has a history is *only one* and that is the *Christ event*.”²⁴⁵

In the Christ–event, the Son becomes history and the distinct contribution of the Spirit to the event is in taking the Son beyond history. If the Son dies on the cross, the Spirit raises him from the dead and makes him an eschatological being.

If the Son dies on the cross, thus succumbing to the bondage of historical existence, it is the Spirit that raises him from the dead. The Spirit is the *beyond* history, and when he acts in history he does so in order to bring into history the last days, the *eschaton*. Hence, the first fundamental particularity of pneumatology is its eschatological character. The Spirit makes of Christ an eschatological being, the ‘last Adam.’²⁴⁶

Another important contribution of the Spirit to the Christ–event is to make Christ a corporate being.

... because of the involvement of the Holy Spirit in the economy, Christ is not just an individual, not “one” but “many.” This “corporate personality” of Christ is impossible to conceive without pneumatology. ... And it is because of this function of pneumatology that it is possible to speak of Christ as having a “body,” i.e. to speak of ecclesiology, of the Church as the Body of Christ.²⁴⁷

Zizioulas thus argues for the priority of Christ over humanity not on the basis of temporal sequence but on the basis of Christ as a corporate being. Christ’s priority over humanity is a priority of inclusiveness. He writes:

Christ’s priority over us is not a priority like the one created by our individualized existence and characterized by temporal sequence; it is a priority of inclusiveness: the including one being prior to the included. This is precisely because the included is already in the including. God as the Spirit, i.e. as communion, is precisely the all-embracing existence, which is participated without participating.

²⁴⁴ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 130.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 130-131.

In the same Spirit of God, Christ contains us in Himself, by His very constitution as Christ in the Spirit.²⁴⁸

Further, pneumatologically constituted Christology makes communion a reality. The eucharist is not a mere remembrance of the past but a realization of Christ in the Spirit now. "Here the Holy Spirit is not one who *aids* us in bridging the distance between Christ and ourselves, but he is the person of the Trinity who actually realizes in history that which we call Christ, this absolutely relational entity, our Savior."²⁴⁹ Christ becomes the community. According to Zizioulas, Paul's understanding of Christ is that the body of Christ is "literally composed of the charismata of the Spirit." Therefore, for Zizioulas it is not an exaggeration to say that Christ "*exists only pneumatologically*," whether we speak of Christ's physical body or the body of Christ, the church. As church, Christ is the "eschatological Man-yet."²⁵⁰ Our historical existence sees its continuance in Christ and in the Spirit. "Thus when the *eschata* enter into history in the Spirit, time is redeemed from fragmentation, and history acquires a different sense."²⁵¹ Ecclesiology and Christology become one in the Spirit.

Since Christ-truth is existence in the Spirit, in a pneumatological Christology, once more, truth and communion become identical at the historical and anthropological levels. Christ-truth is not an individual existence for its existence is in the Spirit. Also, Christ-truth is realised only in the Spirit. That is why for Zizioulas, Pentecost is both Christological and pneumatological. Unless it is attached to Christology it cannot be considered part of the history of salvation and ceases to be pneumatological in the proper sense.²⁵² He writes:

²⁴⁸ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 182-183.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 183.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 130.

In the description of Pentecost in Acts 2, the significance of the event seems related as much to history as to anthropology: through the outpouring of the Spirit, the "last days" enter into history, while the unity of humanity is affirmed as a diversity of charisms. Its deep significance seems to lie in the fact that this takes place in Christ, viewed both historically and also anthropologically, as a here-and-now reality. The objectivization and individualization of historical existence which implies distance, decay and death is transformed into existence in communion, and hence eternal life for mankind and all creation. In a like manner, the individualization of human existence which results in division and separation is now transformed into existence in communion where the otherness of persons ("on each of them separately," Acts 2.3) is identical with communion within a body. Christ's existence, as described above, is thus made historical and personal through the same movement of the Spirit of God which made Christ Himself into a historical being.²⁵³

The church as eucharistic communion reveals Christ-truth since Christ-truth is revealed or springs from within the community. The truth springs from within the community yet it is not the product of the community. "Christ Himself becomes revealed as truth not *in* a community, but *as* a community. So truth is not just something 'expressed' or 'heard,' a propositional or a logical truth; but something which *is*, i.e. an ontological truth: the community itself becoming the truth."²⁵⁴ Truth itself comes as a "pentecostal event which takes linear history up into a charismatic present-moment."²⁵⁵

Thus the eucharist is not a mere remembrance of the past but a realization of Christ in the Spirit now. Christ becomes the community. That is why the church is constantly constituted pneumatologically. Hence, Christology and ecclesiology become one in the Spirit.²⁵⁶ This makes the church a historical as well as an eschatological reality.

The Spirit is not something that 'animates' a Church which already somehow exists. The Spirit makes the Church *be*. Pneumatology does not refer to the well-being but to the very being of the Church. It is not about a dynamism which is added to the essence of the Church. It is the very essence of the Church. The Church is *constituted* in and through eschatology and communion.²⁵⁷

²⁵³ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 112.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

Thus, Zizioulas shows that pneumatology is an ontological category of Christology and ecclesiology.

Therefore, in conclusion, we can say that the strength of Zizioulas' Spirit Christology is in highlighting that pneumatology is the ontological category of Christology. For him, "to speak of 'Christomonism' in any part of the Christian tradition is to misunderstand or be unfair to this part of tradition."²⁵⁸ By emphasising pneumatology as constitutive of Christology, Zizioulas shows, Christ's priority in terms of inclusiveness, Christ's presence as the eschatological Man—yet, which is a church not an individual. Further, the Spirit changes the linear view of history by bringing *eschata* into history. History becomes the eucharistic presence of God.

Thus Zizioulas's presentation that the Holy Spirit is constitutive of incarnation emphasises that *Logos* Christology alone, taken as it is, is incomplete and needs to be complemented by the work of the Holy Spirit. The incarnation is a Trinitarian event since it is "formed by the work of the Spirit, and is nothing else than the expression and realization of the will of the Father."²⁵⁹ The Christ—event can only be interpreted in relation to the Father and the Spirit. The Christ event is an "*an integral part of the economy of the holy Trinity.*"²⁶⁰ The pneumatological standpoint gives a Trinitarian basis for Christology.

Further, both Christology and pneumatology are constituent elements of ecclesiology that guard the church from being hierarchical and institutional. Charismatic and institutional elements go together in the Christological and pneumatological foundation of the Church.

²⁵⁸ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 127.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-112.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

Two more points are of interest in the Spirit Christology of Zizioulas concerning the association of the Spirit and Christ: the Spirit makes Christ corporate and eschatological. In accordance with the Eastern tradition, for which communion and eschatology are the two fundamental aspects of pneumatology, he says that the Spirit adds two dimensions to Christology, namely eschatology and communion. But does this mean that Christology is dependent on pneumatology? Who is prior, Christ or the Spirit? Concerning the question of priority, Zizioulas shows that the New Testament speaks of the priority of both. Christ gives the Spirit to his followers. Christ has to leave in order to make room for the Spirit. At the same time, the Spirit forms Christ's life from the beginning. The Spirit constitutes the very identity of Christ.²⁶¹ So Zizioulas argues, "so long as the unity between Christology and Pneumatology remains unbreakable the question of priority can remain a theologoumenon."²⁶² Further, he points out that in the Greek theological thinking, the *hypostasis* of the Father is the cause of both the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit.²⁶³ Therefore, ultimately the Father is prior to both the Son and the Spirit. But does this not lead to the subordination of the Son and the Spirit to the Father or posit hierarchy in Trinity?

Gavin D'Costa criticises Zizioulas' defence of the Cappadocian introduction of causality into the being of God. He cites Alan Torrance in agreement who states,

Given that what is being referred to is not some contingent existent or mere 'structure' conceived as 'existing by itself', but nothing less than God, it seems to

²⁶¹ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 128.

²⁶² Zizioulas mentions that "For various reasons which have to do with the idiosyncrasy of the West (concern with history, ethics etc), a certain priority will always be given by it to Christology over Pneumatology. Indeed, there are reasons to suppose that this could be spiritually expedient, especially in our time. Equally, for the East Pneumatology will always occupy an important place given the fact that a liturgical meta-historical approach to Christian existence seems to mark the Eastern ethos. Different concerns lead to different emphases and priorities." Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 129. But what is important for Zizioulas is that the essential content of both Christology and pneumatology must be present.

²⁶³ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 41.

us that he [Zizioulas] fails to offer sufficiently compelling arguments as to why it should be of 'incalculable importance' that we do *not* conceive of the intra-divine communion of the Trinity as the ground of all that is, that is, as sufficient in itself and as indeed 'capable' of existing 'by itself.'²⁶⁴

Furthermore, Thomas Weinandy criticises the Cappadocian interpretation of the sole monarchy of the Father. He writes:

The Godhead resides in the Father alone, and he shares his divinity with the Son and the Holy Spirit as they emanate out from him in a sequential pattern. This conception, while giving greater integrity to the distinct persons and priority to the unbegotten Father, jeopardizes Nicaea's *homoousion* doctrine that the one Godhead resides in and is the interrelationship among the persons, and not just in the Father alone.²⁶⁵

D'Costa, taking support from Weinandy, argues that Zizioulas' prioritization of the person and the Father as cause may lead to an affirmation of a linear, sequential model of the Trinity and the subordination of the Spirit to the Father and to the Son. This is a valuable criticism, but Zizioulas' interpretation of Christ and the Church as constituted by the Spirit does not necessarily yield a linear conception of the Trinity. For Zizioulas, the Spirit brings the eschatological dimension into history and gives history a different meaning. It turns history into a presence of God.²⁶⁶ Zizioulas says, "Unless the Church lets Pneumatology so condition Christology that the sequence of 'yesterday-today-tomorrow' is transcended, she will not do full justice to Pneumatology; she will enslave the Spirit in a linear *Heilsgeschichte*."²⁶⁷ Thus, he seems to offer a rich and dynamic understanding of the Spirit.

²⁶⁴ Alan J. Torrance, *Persons in Communion: An Essay on Trinitarian Description and Human Participation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), p. 293, cited in Gavin D'Costa, *Sexing the Trinity: Gender, Culture and the Divine* (London: SCM, 2000), p. 19.

²⁶⁵ Thomas G. Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), p. 10, cited in D'Costa, *Sexing the Trinity*, p. 17.

²⁶⁶ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, pp. 182-183.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

Further, in emphasising the *hypostasis* rather than nature, he shows that 'person' is the primary ontological category rather than nature. Each person is unique and each person is a mystery not merely reduced to natural qualities, class, sex and all such finite categories. Each one's identity is not in class or gender stereotypes but in his or her unique personhood.

Personhood is not about qualities or capacities of any kind: biological, social or moral. Personhood is about hypostasis, i.e., the claim to *uniqueness* in the absolute sense of the term, and this cannot be guaranteed by reference to sex or function or role, or even cultivated consciousness of the 'self' and its psychological experiences, since all of these can be *classified*, thus representing qualities shared by more than one being, and do not point to absolute uniqueness.²⁶⁸

Harrison says that Zizioulas' interpretation of personhood shows that "otherness of the person different from oneself is rightly seen as an occasion for communion, not as so often an occasion for fear and hostility."²⁶⁹ Thus, Zizioulas' interpretation of person has implications for social living.

Moreover, Zizioulas' distinction between an individual and a true person is significant for the interpretation of the person of Christ. Rather than speaking about Christ in terms of two natures, he identifies the person of Christ with the *hypostasis* of the Son. The starting point for Christology is the person of Christ since for Zizioulas the "basis of ontology is the person."²⁷⁰ He offers us a shift in starting point from nature to person in interpreting Christ.

²⁶⁸ Nonna Verna Harrison, 'Zizioulas on Communion and Otherness', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 42, no. 3-4 (1998), 273-300, (p. 276), citing Zizioulas, "On being a Person: Towards an Ontology of Personhood," in Christoph Schwobel and Colin E. Gunton, eds., *Persons, Divine and Human: Kings's College Essays in Theological Anthropology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), P. 45.

²⁶⁹ Harrison, 'Zizioulas on Communion and Otherness', p. 275.

²⁷⁰ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 55.

2.3.3.3 David Coffey: The Mutual Love Theory

The Orthodox theologians point out that in Scholastic theology there is a lack of reflection on the role of the Holy Spirit in Christology proper. We have mentioned in the previous section Zizioulas' criticism of Vatican II. Similarly, the Orthodox theologian Vladimir Lossky argues that in Roman Catholic theology the Spirit is subordinated to the Son and thus loses *hypostatic* independence. He argues for a distinct economy of the Spirit alongside that of the Son. Likewise, Nikos Nissiotis²⁷¹ and Boris Bobrinskoy²⁷² criticise the Christomonistic tendency of the Western church and stress the link between the work of the Holy Spirit and that of Christ.

However, the Orthodox criticisms of the Western christomonism, the subordination of charisma to institution that results in ecclesial hierarchy and the loss of eschatological perspective converge upon one central issue, namely, the Western interpolation of the *filioque* clause ('and from the Son') into the Niceno–Constantinopolitan Creed. This remains as one of the main factors that cause East–West division. The underlying theological issue of the *filioque* controversy is the different conceptions of the Trinity. The East interprets the doctrine of the Trinity in terms of single origin: the Father is the origin of the Son and the Spirit. The Western interpretation is in terms of relations of opposition: the Holy Spirit

²⁷¹ See Nikos A. Nissiotis, 'The Main Ecclesiological Problem of the Second Vatican Council and Position of the Non–Roman Churches Facing It', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 6 (1965), 31–62.

²⁷² Bobrinskoy writes: "Generally speaking, the Scholastic pneumatology has been truncated in two principal ways: first, by being reduced to a single speculative chapter of trinitarian theology, focussing on the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father alone, or from the Father through the Son; and second, by limiting its account of the function of the Spirit to a consideration of his gifts (*charismata*) within the Church and his sanctifying activity in the spiritual life of individual believers. In both cases, the organic, 'normative' link of pneumatology with christology has been lost or ignored." Bobrinskoy, 'The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ', p. 49. So in Bobrinskoy's view, an over emphasis on Christology makes Church an institution and reduces living faith to dogmatics. Bobrinskoy, 'The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ', p. 50. And Fr John Meyendorff says, "There is no way of separating or isolating the Spirit from the Son from the 'fullness of Divinity', which has been revealed in Christ once and for all. It is such attempted separations which lead to various reductions of the Christian message: the notion of a 'third covenant' of the Spirit, still forthcoming; charismaticism, which opposes itself to a christocentric and eucharistic understanding of the Church..." John Meyendorff, 'The Theology of the Holy Spirit,' in *Catholicity and the Church* (New York, 1983), p. 20, cited by Bobrinskoy, 'The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ', p. 50.

proceeds from the Father and the Son. According to Lossky, the theological method of the West, which interprets the diversity from the perspective of unified essence, impersonalises the Trinity. He says that, "in general the origin of the persons of the Trinity therefore is impersonal, having its real basis in the one essence, which is differentiated by its internal relations. The general character of this triadology may be described as a pre-eminence of natural unity over personal triunity, as an ontological primacy of the essence over the *hypostases*."²⁷³ He thinks that the Eastern affirmation of the monarchy of the Father secures the antinomy between nature and person.²⁷⁴ For Lossky, "the relations are the basis of the *hypostases*, which define themselves by their mutual opposition, the first to the second, and these two to the third."²⁷⁵ Hence, "the relations only serve to *express* the hypostatic diversity of the Three; they are not the basis of it. It is the absolute diversity of the three hypostases which determines their differing relations to one another, not *vice versa*."²⁷⁶ Hence the Western interpretation of the Trinity not only threatens personhood, independence of the Holy Spirit and deification, it runs the danger of turning theology into a rationalistic endeavour. It precludes the mystical approach to the divine. The antinomy of nature and person or essence and energies aids us to transcend a philosophic/rationalistic approach to God and elevates us to a personal ecstatic union.²⁷⁷

The Australian Roman Catholic theologian David Coffey's mutual love theory is, in a way, a response to the Orthodox criticism that in the Scholastic theory there is a lack of clear exposition of the specificity of the person and work of the Holy Spirit and the place of the

²⁷³ Aristotle Papanikolaou, 'Divine Energies or Divine Personhood: Vladimir Lossky and John Zizoulas on Conceiving the Transcendent and Immanent God', *Modern Theology*, 19 no. 3 (2003), 357-385, (p. 361), citing Vladimir Lossky, "The Procession of the Holy Spirit in Orthodox Doctrine" *In The Image and Likeness* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir Seminary Press, 2001), p. 77.

²⁷⁴ Papanikolaou, 'Divine Energies or Divine Personhood', p. 361, citing Vladimir Lossky, "The Procession of the Holy Spirit in Orthodox Doctrine" p. 77.

²⁷⁵ Papanikolaou, 'Divine Energies or Divine Personhood', p. 379, n. 16.

²⁷⁶ Papanikolaou, 'Divine Energies or Divine Personhood', p. 361, citing Vladimir Lossky, "The Procession of the Holy Spirit in Orthodox Doctrine" p.79.

²⁷⁷ Papanikolaou, 'Divine Energies or Divine Personhood', pp. 362-363.

Holy Spirit in the redemptive economy of the Son, and also a response to the *filioque* controversy.

Coffey, like Moltmann and Zizioulas, shows that Spirit Christology is a necessary complement to *Logos* Christology. He sees a close relationship between Jesus' divine Sonship and the bestowal of the Spirit on him in the Gospels. Matthew (1:18-25) and Luke (1:26-38) situate the bestowal of the Spirit and the creation of Sonship in Jesus at the very beginning of Jesus' life. The Lucan text makes it clear that it is through the power of the Spirit that the human child Jesus is created.²⁷⁸ The Spirit creates the humanity of Christ, sanctifies it, and draws it into unity with the divine Son. From this moment, the Holy Spirit becomes Jesus' own. Jesus' total human reality depends on this Sonship or the continual inspiration of the Spirit.²⁷⁹

For Coffey the baptismal account of Mark is significant since it contains allusions to Old Testament texts such as Gen 22:1, Ps 2:7 and Isa 42:1. The suffering servant of God of Isaiah can be compared with the Son of God of the New Testament. Both the suffering servant of the Old Testament and the Son of God of the New Testament were endowed with the Spirit, both had a specific vocation and were obedient to that vocation. "What distinguishes them is the special intimacy and love that a Father has for a Son over and above that which a master has for a faithful servant. A son is everything a servant is and more."²⁸⁰ This intimacy and special love enabled Jesus to address God as '*abba*.'

Hebrews 9:13-14 states 'for if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much

²⁷⁸ David Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', *Theological Studies*, 51 no. 2 (1990), 193-229, (pp. 203-204).

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 204.

more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.' Coffey points out that this portrays the life of the servant of the Lord of Isaiah. Further, Coffey argues that the phrase 'to bear the sins of many' in Heb 9:28 which refers to Isa 53:12 from the fourth Servant Song, shows that the servant theme is "subsumed into the unique Sonship of Jesus."²⁸¹ The servant of the Lord yields up his life as the Son in Hebrews 9:13-14 as a guilt-offering for many. God puts his Spirit upon him (Isa 42:1). "It is in the power of the divine Spirit, accordingly, that the Servant accomplishes every phase of his ministry, including the crowning phase in which he accepts death for the transgression of his people, filling the twofold role of priest and victim, as Christ does in this epistle."²⁸²

Hence Coffey thinks that the Old Testament understanding of the Spirit and the Spirit's relationship to the servant of God would have provided a suitable background for the New Testament writers to interpret the person and work of Jesus.²⁸³ However, the Spirit of God in the Old Testament, which was seen as creative and empowering, is now seen in the New Testament as the actual event of Christ. The event of Christ is the mutual communication of God's love, which is called the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is Jesus' love for the Father and the Father's love for Jesus. While it incorporates the Old Testament ideas of Spirit as creative and inspiring power, in Jesus it is something radically new. It is love that "includes or subsumes creation and inspiration."²⁸⁴ In Christ it adds a new dimension of mutual love since the "true and deepest nature of the Spirit is revealed in the Christ event itself."²⁸⁵ Hence, the Christ-event is the revelation of the Trinity itself.

²⁸¹ Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', p. 211.

²⁸² Ibid., pp. 210-211, citing F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1964), p. 205.

²⁸³ Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', p. 204.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 204-205.

Further, the difference between the prophets who were filled by the Holy Spirit occasionally and Jesus is that Jesus had been given the Holy Spirit in a “uniquely radical way.”²⁸⁶ The Spirit remains on him and was given to him “without measure” (Jn 3:34). He is called the beloved Son; he imparts the Spirit to others; and he has the authority to send the Spirit.²⁸⁷ Only Jesus appropriated the Spirit “initially and made it more and more completely his own through his life and his death.”²⁸⁸

The Holy Spirit is divine love ‘incarnate’ in the human love of Jesus. Hence it is possible to say that Jesus is the incarnation of the Holy Spirit.²⁸⁹ Jesus’ love for God and love for neighbour in the course of life is elicited by the Holy Spirit in him. The activity of Christ is “neither simply divine nor simply human, but as something unique, divine–human, *theandric*.”²⁹⁰ He is the neighbourly love present in Jesus’ humanity. The Spirit is incarnate in Jesus’ love of God and neighbour. Therefore, for Coffey, the proper title of the Holy Spirit is Christ’s love for his brethren.²⁹¹ Hence, the New Testament, particularly the Synoptics, presents Jesus’ Sonship as one that is produced by the bestowal of the Holy Spirit on him by the Father.

Coffey observes that in the descending Christology of John’s Gospel, the Spirit does not play any active role in the life of Jesus. The Spirit merely bears witness to revelation from outside.²⁹² The Holy Spirit has a role in incarnational Christology but not in Jesus’ relationship with the Father. Johannine Christology does not give a role to the Spirit as the

²⁸⁶ Coffey, ‘The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son’, p. 212.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 213.

²⁸⁹ David M. Coffey, ‘A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit’, *Theological Studies*, 47 (1986), 227-250, (p. 238).

²⁹⁰ David Coffey, ‘The Theandric Nature of Christ’, *Theological Studies*, 60 no. 3 (1999), 405-431, (p. 407).

²⁹¹ Coffey, ‘A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit’, p. 239.

²⁹² Coffey, ‘The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son’, p. 207, referring to Jn 15:26; I Jn 5:7.

Synoptics do. The church doctrines and theology, following John, have failed to see the Spirit's role in the life of Jesus. So Coffey says that Synoptic Christology, which sees the divine Sonship of Jesus as produced by the bestowal of the Spirit on him, is an alternative to the descending Christology of John. The incarnational Christology of John, which speaks about the assumption of Christ's human nature by the *Logos*, needs to be complemented by the Synoptic Christology, which speaks about the role of the Spirit in incarnation, since sanctification and union are two operations performed by the Holy Spirit and the Son respectively. The Holy Spirit and the Son play complementary roles. That is why it is important to see the role of the Holy Spirit as complementary to the role of the Son. So Christology from above is complementary to Christology from below.²⁹³ Christology from below contributes an element that is lacking in Christology from above and vice versa. In the light of each other, a balanced Christology can be attained.

However, from Coffey's point of view, a careful study of the Gospel of John will help us to see that the role of the Holy Spirit in incarnation is not neglected even by this author.²⁹⁴ For example, in John 1:29-34 where the baptism of Jesus is explained, the emphasis is on the "bestowal of the Spirit on the newly enfleshed Word."²⁹⁵ It is through Jesus' flesh that men and women encounter the power of the Spirit (Jn 6:53-57, 63; Jn 19:34; also I Jn 5:6-8; I Jn 4:2). This sacramentalism of the flesh is important for John. That is why John emphasises that the Spirit remained on Jesus (1:32 and 33). Thus, Jesus is the "source of the Spirit for others."²⁹⁶

²⁹³ Coffey, 'The Theandric Nature of Christ', p. 428.

²⁹⁴ Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', p. 209.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 207.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

Similarly, in Coffey's opinion, John 19:30²⁹⁷ speaks of the Spirit of Jesus. Jesus makes the Spirit his own and hence the Spirit is the "vehicle of his unique personality."²⁹⁸ In his analysis, John 20:22²⁹⁹ is the full revelation of what is indicated in John 19:30.³⁰⁰ However, in the descending Christology of Johannine theology, Jesus makes the Spirit his own but it does not explain how this is done. On the other hand, since the Synoptics make the Spirit the foundation of Jesus' Sonship, this shows that he has the capacity to make the Spirit his own.³⁰¹ So, following these scriptural accounts, Coffey concludes that the bestowal of the Spirit from conception is the cause of Jesus' Sonship.

Coffey's theory, built around these scriptural supports, which he calls "the bestowal model of Trinity" or "the mutual love theory", was developed in order to complement the *filioque*. His mutual love theory rests on the basic unity between the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit as the mutual bond between the Father and the Son. "The Father bestows love on the Son and in turn the Son bestows love on the Father. The Holy Spirit is the mutual bond between the Father and the Son."³⁰² This explains the ontological status of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Father's love for the Son. The Holy Spirit is divine and personal and it is possible to speak of the proper mission of the Spirit, that is, the Father's love for the Son as the ground of the proper mission of the Spirit in the divine economy.³⁰³ In the same way, the Son's ontological status is clarified. The Son is *homoousios* with the Father, that is, "The Spirit was given to him as *God's* Spirit; it set up a relationship, a bond, with *God*, which was realized in the course of his life and especially in his death, though

²⁹⁷ This verse says 'When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, 'It is finished'; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.'

²⁹⁸ Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', p. 214.

²⁹⁹ This verse says 'And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'

³⁰⁰ Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', p. 214.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Coffey, 'A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit', p. 233.

³⁰³ Ibid., p. 239.

naturally this realization was in the course of his dealings with others."³⁰⁴ So it can be said that his life was lived "within the bounds of his relationship with the Father..."³⁰⁵

Further, according to the mutual love theory, the Son's love for the Father is the Spirit since the love which the Son returns to the Father must be identical with the Father's love for the Son.³⁰⁶ At his death, Jesus returns the Spirit as his own to the Father.³⁰⁷ "If Jesus can return the Spirit as his own and as his love to the Father, and bestow the same Spirit, again as his own and as his love, on his fellow human beings, then this shows that Jesus, like the Father, is divine."³⁰⁸ Thus, Jesus appropriates the Spirit from his conception and makes the Spirit his own,³⁰⁹ and it is because the Spirit has become his own that he can offer the Spirit to others.³¹⁰ Christ is the divine Son in humanity because "the humanity of Christ is engaged by the outward-moving love of the Father for the Son, which love is the Holy Spirit, and by the action of the Spirit is drawn into unity with the sole proper object of this love, viz., the divine Son."³¹¹ The Holy Spirit makes Jesus the Son of God in his humanity. The incarnation is the assimilation of sacred humanity into the Trinity.

Here Coffey uses Rahner's argument that human nature has the capacity to surpass the realm of the creaturely and can attain God by an obediencial potency.³¹² Coffey says that Rahner's interpretation of human beings as open towards God contributes to our understanding of the *hypostatic* union of Jesus with the divine Son.³¹³ For Rahner himself,

³⁰⁴ Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', p. 217.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 218.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 219.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 218.

³¹⁰ Ibid., p. 213.

³¹¹ Coffey, 'A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit', p. 236.

³¹² Coffey, 'The Theandric Nature of Christ', p. 412, citing Rahner, "On the Theology of the Incarnation," *Theological Investigations 4* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966), p. 109.

³¹³ David Coffey, 'The "Incarnation" of the Holy Spirit in Christ', *Theological Studies*, 45 no. 3 (1984), 466-480, (p. 467).

as Coffey points out, Christ's divinity is the highest point of his humanity. So incarnation, in Rahner's view, is the "total actualization of human reality."³¹⁴ Therefore, the incarnation of God in Jesus is the "unique, *supreme*, case of the total actualization of human reality..."³¹⁵ This implies that whatever is said of Christ's divinity is also a statement of his humanity. Christ's humanity is not ontologically different from his divinity. Jesus' divinity is his humanity at the zenith of its possibility enabled by the grace of God.³¹⁶ Coffey argues that such an interpretation is not contrary to the New Testament.

In his view, the New Testament does not drive a wedge between humanity and divinity. It is only when the early Christians attempted to speak about the uniqueness of Christ using Greek philosophical categories that a distinction between divinity and humanity was made. But in the Gospels, what is said about his humanity is a statement about his divinity too.³¹⁷ Coffey however, shows the distinctiveness of Jesus from other humans. The "Holy Spirit unites Christ with the Son whereas in the case of humans it is not unity but only union. ... The incarnation terminates in unity of person with the Son, while grace terminates in union..."³¹⁸

This kind of understanding of the divine and human within Jesus is further made clear in Coffey's reinterpretation of *enhypostasia*. According to this doctrine, as we have already mentioned in the first chapter, the human nature of Jesus subsists in the divine Word. Coffey observes that the word 'subsist' is important here since human nature cannot exist

³¹⁴ Coffey, 'The "Incarnation" of the Holy Spirit in Christ', p. 467, citing Rahner, "On the Theology of the Incarnation," p. 110.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Coffey, 'A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit', pp. 236-237.

³¹⁷ Coffey, 'The "Incarnation" of the Holy Spirit in Christ', p. 468.

³¹⁸ Coffey, 'A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit', pp. 236-237.

alongside the divine Word and that would be incompatible with divine perfection.³¹⁹ This means that human nature exists by its own right only by subsisting in the divine Word.³²⁰ But in Coffey's view the *enhypostasia* doctrine can be reversed or inverted. He says, "If one may assert that the human nature of Christ subsists in the person of the divine Word, we may also assert that the divine Word subsists in the human nature of Christ."³²¹

However, Coffey is careful at this point to make clear that the divine person cannot be given adequate and perfect expression in the human nature of Christ. If the divine person can be given an adequate and absolute and perfect expression in the human nature of Christ, then it is not complying with the theology of Chalcedon. It would be monophysitism. Chalcedon maintains carefully the difference of the divine and human natures and at the same time, prohibiting us from speaking about a divided Christ. Hence, Coffey emphasises that according to his reinterpretation of *enhypostasia*, it is the divine person who exists in the human nature of Christ.³²² He writes,

The Father's love that is Holy Spirit rests upon the Son in the immanent Trinity is directed beyond the Godhead in the economic Trinity. It creates the humanity of Christ, which is actually the work of all the three divine persons and it draws the humanity of Christ to the Son in the immanent Trinity. So it is the unity of person with the Son. Assimilation is the work of the Holy Spirit or in other words, the Father acting by the Spirit.³²³

Therefore, Jesus who is united with the divine person is *theandric*; the human nature of Jesus is *theandric*. There is a single *theandric* operation in Jesus.³²⁴ Jesus is "human in a

³¹⁹ Coffey, 'The Theandric Nature of Christ', p. 414.

³²⁰ Ibid., pp. 414-415.

³²¹ Ibid., p. 417.

³²² Coffey, 'The "Incarnation" of the Holy Spirit in Christ', p. 468.

³²³ Ibid., p. 472. The immanent Trinity refers to what God is eternally in God's own divine life and the economic Trinity refers to what God is in relation to the world. In other words, it refers to God's communication to the world. See T. F. Torrance, *The Ground and Grammar of Theology* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1980), pp. 157-58.

³²⁴ Coffey, 'The Theandric Nature of Christ', p. 418.

divine way and divine in a human way.”³²⁵ Coffey claims that this can be understood better if we complement the interpretation of *enhypostasia* with a re-interpretation of *communicatio idiomatum*. Here again, Coffey claims that Rahner is helpful in seeing *communicatio* as identical with the incarnation.

If divine being or subsistence can be received in a human way such that human being truly becomes divine being, then Incarnation becomes the most radical possible instance of the communication of the divine to the human, and as such the basis of any other communication that might take place in Christ.³²⁶

Following this, Coffey sees *communicatio idiomatum* as the “ontological communication from the divine to the human nature.”³²⁷ It is not merely an exchange of certain statements about God-man as it is in the classical definition. For Coffey, it is meaningless to speak of an interchange of attributes unless it is based on the ontological communication between the natures.³²⁸ The communication of divine *esse* is the fundamental or the foundational communication from the divine to the human nature of Christ. This makes Christ the unique, only-begotten Son of God.³²⁹ So, *communicatio* means that Jesus receives divine Sonship in a human way. Coffey explains,

In Christ there is a single *esse* corresponding to his single divine personhood. In as much as he is the incarnate Word of God, this *esse* viewed from the perspective of the communicating Word is the divine *esse*. But in so far as it founds Christ’s human nature in existence, it is received as a human *esse*... Yet this human *esse* is not in every respect the same as ours, for in our case it founds a purely human person and is a mere created delimitation of, and participation in, the divine *esse*, whereas in his case it founds the unique person who is both human and divine, and it is more than the mere created participation referred to above. It is neither simply divine nor simply human, but in keeping with his human nature, is *theandric*.³³⁰

Thus, Coffey brings together *enhypostasia* and *communicatio idiomatum*. “The *enhypostasia* sets the two natures in their correct ontological relationship, which the

³²⁵ Coffey, ‘The Theandric Nature of Christ’, p. 418.

³²⁶ Coffey, ‘The “Incarnation” of the Holy Spirit in Christ’, p. 469.

³²⁷ Coffey, ‘The Theandric Nature of Christ’, p. 423.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 419-420.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 421.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 422.

communication of idioms then transposes into a dynamic communication from the divine to the human.”³³¹ And, as we have discussed above, this dynamic communication from the divine to the human is itself understood as the mutual love between Father and Christ, which is the Spirit.

At this point, Coffey claims that this kind of interpretation does not obscure the identity and distinction between the Father, the Spirit and Christ. In particular, as regards the relationship between Christ and the Spirit, we see in Coffey’s interpretation that there is a close conjunction between the two. Jesus is the incarnation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit penetrates his humanity totally.³³² Thus we speak about the “Christological character of the Holy Spirit,” that the Spirit takes form and shape by incarnating in Christ.³³³ Jesus, permeated by the Spirit, becomes the giver of the Spirit to his followers.³³⁴ The Holy Spirit sent by Jesus now becomes the Spirit of Jesus or the Spirit of Christ or the other *Paraclete*. “This means that the Holy Spirit is now impregnated with the personality of Jesus, and indeed precisely in his orientation to the Father, so that the Spirit is now the mode of Christ’s saving presence with and among his followers after his death. The content of the experience of the Spirit is now Christ himself.”³³⁵

This leads us on to ask how Coffey relates *filioque*, as we have mentioned already the much debated issue in Roman Catholic – Orthodox dialogue, with his mutual love theory. As far as Coffey is concerned, there is a difference between the *filioque* and the mutual love theory. He writes,

³³¹ Coffey, 'The Theandric Nature of Christ', p. 423.

³³² Coffey, 'The "Incarnation" of the Holy Spirit in Christ', p. 478.

³³³ Ibid., p. 478.

³³⁴ Refers to Jn 4:14; 7:37-39; 15:26; 16:7; 20:22; Lk 24:49; Acts 2:33; I Cor 15:45.

³³⁵ Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', p. 212.

The *Filioque* is an outward-moving model of the Trinity, in that it has to do with the procession of the Son out of the Father, and then with that of the Holy Spirit as a continuation of this movement as He proceeds out of the Son as well as the Father; and the mutual-love theory is an inward-moving model, in that the Son, having moved out of the Father, is reclaimed by the Father's love and returns to him in that love which he has now made his own.³³⁶

But at the same time Coffey claims that the mutual love theory affirms the *filioque*.

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son inasmuch as the Son makes Him his own and returns Him to the Father as his own. The Father and the Son are therefore copinciples of the Holy Spirit, and since the Spirit is one, they must constitute a single principle.³³⁷

So Coffey admits that his mutual love theory presupposes the *filioque* since, according to this theory, "the Spirit ultimately issues from the Father alone, in that the Father's love for the Son has a priority of order (not of time) over the Son's love for the Father."³³⁸ Coffey hopes that his mutual love theory can bring reconciliation between East and West even though it presupposes the *filioque*. Perhaps, the mutual love theory presents the *filioque* in a way that is acceptable to the East.

Besides this advantage of being a link between East and West, Coffey argues that the mutual love theory presents something that is not known in *filioque*. In the mutual love theory the Father bestows the Spirit on the Son and the Son bestows the Spirit on the Father. Thus, the Father and the Son bestow the Spirit on each other mutually. Thus, they are bestowers of the Spirit. This kind of relationship between the Father and the Son in bestowing the Spirit on each other is something that we do not learn in the *filioque*.³³⁹

The mutual love theory gives us important information about the Trinity that we would not otherwise have. In particular, it tells us that the Son as it were faces the Father, as well as facing away from Him. As he faces away from the Father he proceeds from the Father, is sent into the world, and also constitutes with the Father

³³⁶ Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', p. 220.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 221.

the coprinciple of the procession of the Holy Spirit and cosender of the Holy Spirit upon the Church. But as he faces the Father he is joined to Him in a mutual love, which is identical with the Holy Spirit. The return to God, of Jesus and ourselves with him, is explained in the light of *this* theology as we in our spiritual journey are caught up in this same relationship of Sonship.³⁴⁰

If we think from the perspective of epistemology, the mutual love theory is prior to the *filioque* because our understanding begins from the Christian experience of Jesus who already had a unique relationship with God. But if we think from the perspective of ontology, *filioque* is prior to the mutual love theory since in the order of givenness, the *filioque* comes first. In *filioque*, “the distinction of persons logically precedes their union, and their procession must precede their return. But in the same order, from another point of view, the mutual–love theory takes priority, because it presupposes and completes the *filioque*.”³⁴¹ In all these, Coffey wishes to show that his mutual love theory offers us a new understanding of the Trinity. Trinity is that which encompasses “distinction *and* union, procession *and* return, the *filioque and* the mutual–love theory.”³⁴²

In conclusion, we can say that Coffey’s approach is ‘both–and,’ not ‘either–or.’ His main argument, as we have discussed above, is that the divine Sonship of Jesus perceived in light of the mutual love theory and the scriptural accounts make it clear that the Sonship of Jesus occurs precisely by the bestowal of the Father’s love; that is, the Holy Spirit is a complementary approach to the descending Christology.

Coffey’s Spirit Christology could bring together both the ascending and descending Christologies, the ontological and psychological aspects or, in other words, he could highlight the psychological dimension of the *hypostatic* union. Jesus has a unique

³⁴⁰ Coffey, ‘The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son’, p. 228.

³⁴¹ Ibid., p. 227.

³⁴² Ibid., pp. 227-228.

ontological, psychological and spiritual relationship with the Father since the Spirit is the Father's love. It gives equal value to existential and ontological Sonship since Christ's divine Sonship is produced by the bestowal of the Spirit, which is the Father's love, but at the same time, it does not negate the existential aspect of Jesus' growth, mission and the final submission of himself in the Spirit to the Father.

Further, seeing a relationship between the divine Sonship of Jesus and the bestowal of the Spirit places Christology in a Trinitarian context. The Christ-event is a revelation of the Trinity itself. In the economic Trinity, all the persons of the Trinity are present. Hence, Coffey argues that the economic Trinity is the reflection of the copresence of the persons or the circumincession of the persons in the immanent Trinity.³⁴³ However, Coffey does not equate the economic Trinity with the immanent Trinity. That is why he argues that Christ's human nature is not to be equated with the divine person. In his view, Christ's human nature only expresses the divine person relative to the capacity of human nature. Therefore, it is not an absolute, perfect expression of the divine person. He distinguishes between "an *absolutely* perfect communication of divinity that takes place in the immanent Trinity, a *relatively* perfect communication in the economic Trinity, and an *imperfect* communication in creation, where there occurs communication in its 'deficient mode' but not self-communication."³⁴⁴

However, placing Christology in the Trinity has implications for the understanding of the suffering of God. "All of Jesus' human experiences, including his sufferings, are imported into the life of the Trinity..."³⁴⁵ This does not in any way compromise divine

³⁴³ Coffey, 'A Proper Mission of the Holy Spirit', p. 228.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

³⁴⁵ Coffey, 'The Theandric Nature of Christ', p. 425.

transcendence since there is a “dialectic of identity and non–identity between the existence of the Son in his divine and in his human nature.”³⁴⁶

Coffey’s other contribution to Spirit Christology lies in his reinterpretation of *enhypostasia* and *communicatio idiomatum* and in explaining how they complement each other for a better understanding of the person and work of Christ. As we have shown above, to reinterpret *enhypostasia*, Coffey borrows a great deal from Rahner’s anthropology. For Rahner, as we have seen, incarnation is supremely the perfection of human reality.

Although human nature is created, it is potentially divine. Coffey argues that “this does not mean that Rahner has lapsed into Monophysitism (from below), Monotheletism, or Apollinarianism, as for him Christ’s human nature remains genuinely human, that is to say, it is *divinely* human, human in a divine way, or, equally, divine in a human way.”³⁴⁷

These are some of the positive features of Coffey’s Spirit Christology. However, Coffey realises that his interpretation of the Holy Spirit as the manifestation of the mutual love between the Father and the Son might raise a question as to whether the Holy Spirit is distinct from the other persons of Trinity and whether the Spirit is a mere force or operation between two persons. Coffey says that the mutual love between the Father and the Son constitutes the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. “This means that it is a distinct spiritual hypostasis, center of spiritual activity, which in the unity of the divine nature it has in common with the other two persons, unique only in its origin, the manner of its procession, and its property of being the mutual love of the other two.”³⁴⁸ So Coffey does not seem to impersonalise the Spirit.

³⁴⁶ Coffey, ‘The Theandric Nature of Christ’, p. 425.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 412.

³⁴⁸ Coffey, ‘The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son’, p. 226.

2.4 Conclusion

In general, all the approaches of Spirit Christology centre on the divinity of the Holy Spirit and see the Spirit as the interpretative principle (to use Kilian McDonnell's expression). The Spirit as a Christological subject takes us beyond the classical Alexandrine *Logos*–flesh Christology and Antiochene *Logos*–*anthropos* Christology. The Ebionite Spirit Christology ends up in adoptionism. When this is seen with the Christologies that begin with Christ's resurrection and exaltation, it can bring a holistic understanding of Christ. All the approaches we discussed seek to recover a biblical framework for Christology. Hook uses the Hebrew idea of Spirit in the Synoptic presentation of Jesus and thus places Jesus in the long tradition of Jewish expectation of the promised Messiah who will be anointed by the Spirit of God. It is from the centrality of the Spirit that Hook attempts to reconstruct Christology and Trinity. However, we encounter a reductionist understanding of the Spirit in Hook and consequently he does not offer a Trinitarian basis for Christology. Likewise, Lampe does not see Christology in a Trinitarian framework. In his analysis, the *hypostasis* of the Son is the mere projection of the historical Jesus and his relationship to the Father. Thus, he denies any *hypostatic* distinction. Nevertheless, Hook's and Lampe's emphasis on the personal union between divine Spirit and human spirit is a positive contribution to understanding the person of Christ. They recommend that the Christ–event can be interpreted using the concept of Word, Spirit or Wisdom, thus envisaging plurality in Christological reflection. However, we argue that any Spirit Christology needs to set Christology in a Trinitarian framework. The complementary approach aims to do this.

The presumption in the complementary approach is that the *Logos* Christology or incarnational Christology will be better understood or even modified in the light of an

analysis of pneumatological Christology. In other words, it brings the descending Christology and the ascending Christology into one compact whole, thus seeking to comprehend the pre-existent Christ in the light of the exaltation and glorification of Christ. In the complementary approach, Jesus' humanity is emphasised without diminishing his divinity. Coffey speaks about the *theandric* nature of Christ. It is human and divine, and in Christ there is "single *theandric* nature and act of existence."³⁴⁹ Hence, the *theandric* operation in Christ accounts for Christ's historical character, while it also maintains his unique status as Son of God. Coffey's attempt to interpret the Chalcedonian dogma, that Christ is to be understood as a unified subject at once divine and human, by way of reinterpreting *enhypostasia* and complementing it with *communicatio idiomatum*, is a helpful hermeneutical approach to interpret the person of Christ.

Likewise, Moltmann and Zizioulas reconceive Christ's personhood. Zizioulas' prioritization of *hypostasis* over nature seeks to interpret Christ in terms of person rather than in terms of natures. Moltmann shows that Christ's personhood is relational, concrete and communitarian. Zizioulas, emphasising the two Orthodox features of pneumatology, namely eschatology and communion, brings in the Orthodox contribution to Spirit Christology. This makes Christ corporate and adds an eschatological dimension to Christology. Further, in the complementary approach, the emphasis on the relation between the Spirit and Christ is not linear but mutual and reciprocal and thus Christology and pneumatology are not identified without any distinction. Consequently, the complementary approach sets Christology in a Trinitarian framework. It is from the vantage point of the Spirit that Christology, soteriology, Trinity and ecclesiology are interpreted. Coffey's mutual love theory shows that Trinity can take a different shape. It

³⁴⁹ Coffey, 'The Theandric Nature of Christ', p. 422.

can be dynamic and circular. By complementing the *filioque* with the mutual love theory, Coffey shows Spirit Christology holds a promise that might bring unity between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions. In the next chapter, we shall elaborate on these aspects of Spirit Christology, deal with some issues in Spirit Christology and identify some points for further reflection.

Chapter Three

Spirit Christology: An Analysis

3.1 Introduction

The goal in this chapter is constructive. We are not attempting to show here that the *Logos* Christology is wrong, although occasionally there will be an explicit or an implicit comparison between Spirit Christology and *Logos* Christology. Rather we wish to show that Spirit Christology can bring in certain important aspects to Christology, which *Logos* Christology has not acknowledged or left understated. This is a positive contribution to Christological thinking. In this chapter, firstly, we shall present all the positive elements of Spirit Christology; secondly, we shall address the issues in Spirit Christology; and, thirdly, we shall consider some points for further reflection.

3.2 The Prospects of Spirit Christology

3.2.1 The Spirit's Role in Christology

All the Spirit Christologies that we discussed so far take the humanity of Jesus seriously and the Spirit's role in Jesus from conception which is what *Logos* Christology found wanting. Many contemporary theologians affirm such a starting point and recognise the role of the Spirit in incarnation. In Joseph Wong's view, that Jesus was born of the Spirit means that his humanity bears a "pneumatic character on account of such a birth."¹ This is the significance of the virgin birth.² It emphasises the pneumatic intervention at the very beginning of Jesus' earthly existence.³ The earthly life of Jesus was "characterized by the Spirit" since Jesus "was always led by the Spirit."⁴ So the person of Christ and all

¹ Joseph H. P. Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', *Gregorianum*, 73 (1992), 57-95, (p. 63).

² *Ibid.*, p. 59.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

soteriological activity is inseparable from the activity of the Spirit. Thus, Spirit Christology contributes this pneumatic dimension to Christology. Another prospect of Spirit Christology as Lampe explains, is that the Spirit refers not to a mode of God's being but God's own personal outreach. Thus, the Spirit escapes *hypostatization* and does not cause problems of subordinationism and docetism in Christology. Likewise, Haight writes:

Beyond the historicity of the experience of the Spirit of God at work in Jesus, another reason, also internal to the New Testament, recommends Spirit Christology. The symbol of the Spirit more forthrightly makes the claim that God, God's very self, acted in and through this Jesus. This stands in contrast to the symbols of God's Word and Wisdom which, insofar as they became personified and then hypostatized, tend to connote someone or something distinct from and less than God that was incarnate to Jesus even though it is called divine or of God. By contrast the symbol of God as Spirit is not a personification of God but refers directly to God, so that it is clear from the beginning that nothing less than God was at work in Jesus.⁵

So rather than saying that the *Logos* or the Word is incarnate in Jesus, Spirit Christology is able to locate the Incarnation in Jesus himself without diminishing Jesus' humanity. Going back to the early church councils, we know that the creed of Nicaea affirmed the divinity of Jesus. But as we know, the *hypostatization* of the *Logos* itself caused difficulties in understanding the divinity of Jesus in the early centuries, which Nicaea had to deal with. Whereas, Spirit Christology can prove much more forcefully the divinity of Jesus than the *Logos* Christology. Moreover, in Spirit Christology, there is a transition or shift from "a static and abstract ontology of God conceived in terms of a divine nature to a conception of God as personal, dynamic activity who is personally present as Spirit."⁶ This does not negate Jesus' humanity and at the same time affirms Jesus' divinity. We are aware of humanity and divinity together. Thus, it maintains the dialectical language of Chalcedon.

⁵ Roger Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology', *Theological Studies*, 53 no. 2 (1992), 257-287, (p. 272).

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

3.2.2 Biblical Sources

Duncan Watson says that "... we not only must look at the 'given' of Chalcedon but also at the 'given' of Scripture..."⁷ It is clear from our discussion of various Spirit Christologies that biblical sources shape the Christological reflection. The aim of Spirit Christologists is not to abandon the Christology of Chalcedon but rather to integrate the insight of Chalcedonian Christology with the Biblical resources. So as Paul W. Newman rightly says, "Since a biblical and contemporary theology of Spirit can derive much of its substance from the accounts of God's Spirit active in Jesus himself, it is not the case that Spirit Christology imposes an arbitrary and foreign system of thought onto the interpretation of Jesus' person and work."⁸

Both the Old and the New Testaments provide resources for Spirit Christology. The Old Testament concept of the Spirit leaves it open to consider the Christ-event not only from the concept of the Spirit but also from Wisdom tradition as well since Spirit, Word and Wisdom are used interchangeably in Hellenistic Judaism.⁹ This itself makes Christology multi-faceted and complementary. This is another contribution of Spirit Christology.

⁷ Duncan Watson, 'Why Chalcedon?' *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 39 no. 1 (1982), 3-22, (p. 4).

⁸ Paul W. Newman, *A Spirit Christology: Recovering the Biblical Paradigm of Christian Faith* (Lanham, New York: University Press of America, 1987), p. xiv.

⁹ Moltmann shows that in the Wisdom of Solomon "ruach and hokmā, Spirit and Wisdom, are so close to one another that they are actually interchangeable. 'The Spirit of the Lord has filled the world' (1:7); 'Thy immortal Spirit is in all things' (12:1); 'I know everything that is hidden and manifest, for Wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me. For in her there is a spirit that is intelligent...' (7:21f.). So what this chapter says about Wisdom can be said about God's Spirit too: it is the 'breath of God's power', 'a pure emanation of the Almighty's glory', 'a reflection of eternal light' and 'an image of his righteousness.'" Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1999), p. 46. Likewise, Congar explains citing Wis 1:4-5; 7:22-23; 9:17 that the Spirit and Wisdom are closely related. See Yves M. J. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, Vol 1, trans. by David Smith (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983), pp. 10-11. Likewise, Charles H. Talbert shows that in I Enoch 42:1-2, there is an identification of Wisdom and Angel. In Wisdom of Solomon 9:1-2 and in Sir 24:3 there is an identification of Wisdom and Word/Logos. In Wisdom of Solomon 18:15 there is an identification of Logos and Angel. And Wisdom of Solomon 9:17 links Wisdom with the Holy Spirit. So the Hellenistic Judaism used Word, Logos, Wisdom and Angel interchangeably. "'The Word became flesh' would equal 'the Spirit descended and remained on Jesus.'" Charles H. Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles*, (New York: Crossroad, 1992), p. 47.

However, concerning the New Testament materials, as we have seen, the Spirit Christologists in general seem to argue that only the Synoptics offer sources for Spirit Christology and ignore the fourth Gospel as a resource for *Logos* Christology.¹⁰ Indeed, the Synoptics present us with accounts of Jesus' birth, life and death in the Spirit. But at the same time, John's Gospel is not devoid of the Spirit's role in the life of Jesus.

Kärkkäinen says

John draws heavily on the OT imagery of the Spirit related to the life-giving power of water and breath, as is evident in his metaphors of rebirth (John 3:5-8), spring of life (John 4:14; 6:63; 7:38-39), and reception of the Spirit's new life (John 20:22; cf. Gen 2:7; Ezek 37:9). He is also fond of another OT metaphor with regard to the Spirit, that of anointing (I John 2:20, 27). With Paul, John shares a vested interest in the integral relationship between Christ and the Spirit, but he depicts this in a different way. Although John presents a high Christology, meaning he regards Jesus as divine and equal to God, he gives a firm place to Jesus' being anointed with the Spirit at the Jordan (John 1:32). Jesus has been given the Spirit 'without measure' (3:34).¹¹

Further, in Kärkkäinen's view, "John also ties Jesus' gift of the Spirit more closely to Jesus' death (John 6:53, 62-63)."¹² John calls the Spirit the 'other *Paraclete*' (John 14:16) with the presumption that Jesus is the first *Paraclete* (I John 2:1). John also connects eschatology to the Spirit.¹³ Hence, it can be stated that Spirit Christology is biblically authenticated.

¹⁰ Indeed there are exceptions. As we have discussed, Coffey draws much from the fourth Gospel for his construal of Spirit Christology. John Knox says that the fourth Gospel is in fact defends the humanity of Jesus. "...The writer's aim must have been to refute those who in his own period were denying that Christ had really come 'in the flesh.'" However, it works with an implicit pre-existent doctrine that leads one to deny the human reality and opt for docetism. John Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ: A Study of Pattern in Christology* (London: Cambridge university Press, 1967), pp. 26-27.

¹¹ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), p. 34. Similarly, Boyd referring to John 4:6; 11:35; 17:13; 4:29; 8:40; 14:28; 5:19; 5:30; 8:26, says that along with the high Christology, there is an emphasis on the full humanity of Jesus in the fourth Gospel. R. H. S. Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India* (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1977), p. 130.

¹² Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, pp. 34-35, citing Raymond E. Brown, "The Gospel according to John 13-21: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary," *The Anchor Bible* (NY: Doubleday, 1970), p. 931.

¹³ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 35.

3.2.3 Trinitarian Basis for Christology

Interpreting the incarnation as the event brought about by the creative act of the Holy Spirit has the advantage of highlighting the unknown, shy member of the Trinity and bringing pneumatology to the forefront. It brings out the doctrinal relevance of the Spirit in Christology and soteriology, ecclesiology and ethics. Pneumatology becomes the key to interpret the various tenets of Christian theology. So when pneumatology becomes the interpretive key it is not only the Father–Son relationship (Nicaea and Chalcedon confined Christology to this dimension) but also the Spirit–Son relationship and the Father–Spirit relationship that need to be included in interpreting the person and work of Christ. As Wong says, Jesus' life is a "relational existence" with the Father and the Spirit.¹⁴ This gives a Trinitarian basis to Christology. It enables us to see both Christology and pneumatology in a new perspective and offers a deeper understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity.

3.2.4 Eschatological Dimension of Christology

Spirit Christology not only gives a Trinitarian basis for Christology but also makes Christology eschatological and cosmic. This affirms Jesus Christ's historical and trans-historical dimensions. Jesus was within history yet his personal presence now knows no such bounds.¹⁵ Hook thinks from the perspective of the biblical category of Yahweh's Spirit but does not place Christology in an eschatological framework. This is done by Zizioulas who draws from the Orthodox contributions for the understanding of the Spirit.

¹⁴ Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', p. 60, citing Moltmann, *The way of Jesus Christ*, p.74.

¹⁵ Walter Kasper, *Jesus the Christ* (London: Burns & Oates, 1976), p. 252.

In the Orthodox view, as we have shown, eschatology and communion are the two significant features of the Spirit. Hence, for Zizioulas, the Spirit offers Christology these two dimensions. This is precisely what is missing in Lampe's Christology too. He sets the Spirit in a broader framework of creation and redemption yet does not allow this to impinge upon Christology. The gift of the Spirit is cosmological, anthropological, soteriological and eschatological. When this is used to the fullest it enriches our understanding of creation, human beings, Christ, salvation and eschatology. In this sense, Spirit Christology has a great deal of potential to touch upon every aspect of theology and bring in new dimensions.

3.2.5 Ontology of the Person

The Christology of the early church is about one person and two natures. But as we have discussed in the Christology of Zizioulas, a special contribution of the Greek thinking is that "the basis of ontology is the person."¹⁶ Even in early Greek theologians such as Cyril of Alexandria, we see that the starting point of Christology is the *hypostasis*, the person and not the natures. Despite the limitation of Alexandrian thinking, the person-centred ontology is a positive contribution. There is a difference between *hypostasis* and nature in Greek thinking. "The Hypostasis 'becomes,' whereas 'nature' is absolutely unchangeable. The Son, by assuming humanity becomes a composite hypostasis."¹⁷ Hence, the emphasis is on the person not the nature. "A person, divine or human, is not, therefore, a simple manifestation of 'nature' (an individual), but a subject, capable of saying 'I' and able to

¹⁶ John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985), pp. 55-56.

¹⁷ John Meyendorff, 'New Life in Christ: Salvation in Orthodox Theology', *Theological Studies*, 50 no. 3 (1989), 481-499, (pp. 496-497). See also John Meyendorff, 'Reply to Jürgen Moltmann's "the Unity of the Triune God"', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 28 no. 3 (1984), 183-188, (p. 188).

transcend, or go beyond, the limits of the nature it possesses.”¹⁸ So if we think in terms of person and not in terms of nature it is possible to say that in the person of Jesus there was a communion between divinity and humanity. This means that the man Jesus had a unique relationship with God. Thus, the difficulty of attributing some experiences to human nature and some to divine nature can be avoided. Further, Zizioulas’ point that Christ’s personhood constituted by the Spirit makes Christ’s personhood relational.

Hence, Christ is not an individual but a person. Similarly, we have seen that, Moltmann speaks of Jesus as a social person and thus avoids the difficulties involved in speaking of Jesus in terms of two natures. Gunton points out that “a person is different from an individual, in the sense that the latter is defined in terms of *separation from* other individuals, the person in terms of *relations with* other persons.”¹⁹ Personhood is constituted by relation. Thus, Christology grounded on personhood rather than on natures would serve as a link in bringing together Trinitarian and Christological doctrines on the one hand and ethical issues on the other.

3.2.6 Spirituality

Spirituality is another area that Spirit Christology enriches. *Logos* Christology concentrated on the ontology of Christ. However, the insight of the Chalcedonian formula is that there was openness to the creation on the part of the *hypostasis* of the Son that the Son assumed humanity.²⁰ Yet, what cannot be denied, even in high Christology with the idea of a pre-existent Son, is that being human means being susceptible to change and

¹⁸ Meyendorff, 'New Life in Christ: Salvation in Orthodox Theology', p. 497. See also John Breck, 'Reflections on the "Problem" of Chalcedonian Christology', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 33 no. 2 (1989), 147-157, (p. 151), n.1.

¹⁹ Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), p. 11.

²⁰ Meyendorff, 'New Life in Christ: Salvation in Orthodox Theology', pp. 491-492.

growth from infancy to adulthood.²¹ This point is much more accentuated in Spirit Christology. Spirit Christologists²² argue that if ontological Sonship is possible then existential Sonship is also possible.

Wong points out that a number of contemporary theologians distinguish between the ontological and existential sonship of Jesus. Rahner and Congar emphasise the role of the Spirit right from the conception of Jesus but stress at the same time that his Sonship is not something mechanical but realised by Jesus by a free response as he lived in obedience to the will of the Father like any other human person.²³ Haight, quoting Dunn, says that it is possible to see the "consciousness of sonship and consciousness of Spirit as two sides of the one coin."²⁴ Jesus was conscious of his divine Sonship and this itself can be the basis of our Christology.

Further, the Christ-event is the source of understanding our life in the Spirit. Jesus' own Spirit-filled life is a model for understanding our own encounter with the Spirit. This implies that "Our highest category is personality, with its essential attribute of Spirithood"²⁵ and there can be a real co-existence between human spirit and the divine Spirit. The transcendent becomes immanent and, as Robinson says, "true discovery of

²¹ Meyendorff, 'New Life in Christ: Salvation in Orthodox Theology', pp. 495.

²² For example, Coffey argues that as we affirm the birth of Jesus by the Spirit, we need to also acknowledge that the humanity of Christ had a history. He was born, grew up in a human way, so there was a "progressive actualization of the divine Sonship." David Coffey, 'The "Incarnation" of the Holy Spirit in Christ', *Theological Studies*, 45 no. 3 (1984), 466-480, (p. 476). Thus, he speaks of the ontological and existential Sonship of Jesus.

²³ Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', p. 65, citing K. Rahner, *The Trinity* (London: Burns & Oates, 1970), pp. 61-63. On this point, see also "Current Problems in Christology," *Theological Investigations* 1, trans. by Cornelius Ernst (London, Darton: Longman & Todd, 1974), 149-200, (pp. 168-174). See also Y. Congar, *The Word and the Spirit* p. 101. "Jesus Christ" in K. Rahner (ed.), *Sacramentum Mundi*, vol.3 (London: Burns & Oates 1969), p. 200; Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, pp. 164-166.

²⁴ Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology', p. 269, citing Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 66.

²⁵ H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit* (Great Britain, Digswell Place: James Nisbet, 1958), p. 66.

transcendence is through immanence.”²⁶ The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom 8:16) and cries in us: ‘Abba, Father’ (Gal 4:6). The Spirit intercedes for us with God (Rom 8:26ff.) and the Spirit enables us to know the significance of Jesus’ redeeming work (I Cor 2:10-14).

This brings the relevance of both Christ and the Spirit to Christian spirituality since we are able to interpret our experience in the light of Christ’s Spirit-filled life and, at the same time, we are able to “offer an explanation of the status of Jesus that justifies Christian experience of him.”²⁷ This means “Jesus’ experience of the Spirit was analogous to our experience of the Spirit.”²⁸ The language of faith and the experience of Jesus must coincide in doing Christology. Christology is the interpretation of Jesus that has its foundation in the experience of salvation that is mediated in and through Jesus.²⁹ And it is clear that in a Spirit Christology “the salvation mediated by Jesus is closely bound up with the way one lives in the Spirit.”³⁰

3.2.7 Deeper Understanding of the Holy Spirit

Furthermore, Spirit Christology warns against a truncated and reductionist understanding of the mystery of the Spirit. It enables us to explore further the multifaceted dimensions of the Spirit’s work. The experience of the Spirit itself is varied and multi-faceted.³¹ If Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit then the Holy Spirit can be understood as the Giver of Life. The *ruach* who was active in creation and is the source of life gives birth to Jesus. That the Spirit rested on Jesus, accompanied Jesus and dwelt in Jesus shows that the Spirit

²⁶ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 56.

²⁷ Haight, ‘The Case for Spirit Christology’, p. 264.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

³¹ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 8.

is the immanent indweller. The Spirit 'searches even the depths of God' (I Cor 2:10ff.). The Spirit is 'sent into our hearts' (Gal 4:6). In Zizioulas' interpretation, Jesus becomes a corporate and relational being in the Holy Spirit. Here we see the Spirit of communion. Moltmann speaks about the kenosis of the Spirit. The suffering history of Jesus is the history of the Spirit. So the Spirit's role can be seen in redeeming and liberating acts. Wong, reflecting on Jesus' act of giving up his Spirit, says that it indicates not only Jesus' death, but also a gift of new life that unites all with God. The Holy Spirit is the unifying love that unites the whole world to God.³² Thus, Spirit Christology highlights the anthropological, Christological, cosmic and eschatological relevance of the Holy Spirit.

3.3 Issues in Spirit Christology

It needs to be admitted, that Spirit Christology with all its prospects also raises many questions. The first question is about adoptionism in Christology. Will not Spirit Christology result in a kind of degree Christology? Related to this is the issue of pre-existence and how we consider the divinity of Christ. The second question is about Christocentrism or pneumatocentrism in Christology; whether the Spirit displaces Christ or not. This is also the question about identity and distinction between Christ and the Spirit. Following this there is a question concerning Trinity. How do our interpretations of Spirit and Christ lead to our conception of Trinity itself? We shall address these issues in order.

3.3.1 Adoptionist Christology or Incarnational Christology?

First, concerning the issue of adoptionism in Christology, we can say that all the theologians we discussed in this study conceive that Christology is the constitution of pneumatology: the Spirit constitutes Christ's life. It is the Spirit, who calls Jesus into

³² Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', p. 71, citing Moltmann, *The Crucified God*, p. 244.

existence.³³ This convergence of Spirit and Christ right from the conception avoids the danger of adoptionism in Christology. Congar, speaking about the specific role of the Holy Spirit in Christ, says that the Spirit is at work from the beginning, in the virginal conception, in the baptism of Jesus, in his temptation and throughout his ministry and this shows that Jesus was Son of God right from conception and that he was not adopted by God as his Son at his baptism. Baptism was a further affirmation of his life in the Spirit. The anointing of Jesus at the time of baptism does not lead to a belief that Jesus was adopted by God as his Son but rather, it is “a new act in which his divine Sonship was made present – the act that made him and declared him to be ‘Christ.’”³⁴ It was after baptism that “he was able to express in an entirely new way, in the perspective of his mission, his consciousness, at the human level, of his quality as the Son of God and of his condition as the Servant.”³⁵ Hence, for Congar, this kind of understanding of Jesus’ divine Sonship precludes the danger of adoptionism.

This is the claim of all the Spirit Christologists we have discussed, including Lampe. The Replacement approach of Lampe, despite its limitations, does not fall into the category of adoptionistic Christology since he emphasizes a personal union between the Spirit and Jesus. Del Colle defends Lampe stating that for Lampe, the Spirit’s indwelling in Jesus is not by human merit but by prevenient grace of God and that the Spirit pervades the whole life of Jesus and this avoids the danger of adoptionism.³⁶ Hence, Spirit Christology affirms and safeguards the integrity of Jesus’ humanity while at the same time it obviates

³³ David Coffey, ‘The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son’, *Theological Studies*, 51 no. 2 (1990), 193-229, (p. 204).

³⁴ Yves Congar, *The Word and the Spirit*, trans. by David Smith (London: Chapman, 1986), p. 88.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 163.

adoptionism. Therefore, as Hook says, “The values of a Spirit Christology are identical with the values of the Logos Christology.”³⁷

But do we have to fear adoptionism as a danger zone in Christology and abandon also its positive contributions? We have already made comments on this in the previous Chapter while discussing the pre-Chalcedonian Spirit Christology. Danielou and Rosato conclude that Ebionite Christology is an adoptionist Christology since the Ebionites taught that Jesus became the Son of God at the time of his baptism. However, Rosato says that we need to consider the positive contribution of adoptionist Christology.³⁸ The positive contribution of adoptionist Christology is that it sets Christology in a broader framework that could incorporate soteriological, cosmic and eschatological dimensions. As Schoonenberg expresses “The historical distance between Jesus and ourselves can then be regarded as a distinct possibility for a better Christology.”³⁹ However, at the same time, Spirit Christology enables us to perceive the “unutilized possibilities of adoption Christology.”⁴⁰

This shows that our option is not between Incarnational/ *Logos* Christology or Adoptionist/ Spirit Christology. Our method is not ‘either or’ but ‘both and.’ It is inclusive. The Spirit as the hermeneutical principle itself offers such a methodology. Hence, adoptionism and incarnationism need to be seen together as one whole. As Schoonenberg thinks, Christ’s conception by the Holy Spirit and also the Word becoming flesh should be taken together. “The two patterns of presenting this origin, that of his being conceived by the Holy Spirit and that of the Word that became flesh in him, are thus necessary, for without these images

³⁷ Norman Hook, *Christ in the Twentieth Century: A Spirit Christology* (London: Lutterworth P, 1968), pp. 7-8.

³⁸ See Chapter Two, pp. 51-55.

³⁹ Piet J. A. M. Schoonenberg, *The Christ* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1972), p. 115.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

we should see in Jesus no more than one who is called, who was first far from God, someone over whom the Spirit came only later.”⁴¹

Hence, essential Christology and functional Christology cannot be opposed to each other nor the Christology from below and Christology from above. Spirit Christology and *Logos* Christology are two alternative interpretations of the same fact that can complement each other. These two complementary approaches are necessary to articulate sufficiently the mystery of incarnation. Therefore, for Schoonenberg it is necessary to include adoption Christology in incarnation Christology since “Jesus’ divine sonship is at the same time with his manhood a reality-in-becoming...”⁴² Underneath all these arguments is the assumption that Jesus’ origin can be perceived either from the pre-existence of the *Logos* or from his conception of the Holy Spirit. Though the Scripture speak of these two patterns, they are not connected with one another.⁴³ Spirit Christology is an attempt to bring these patterns together.

3.3.2 The Pre-existence of the Son

Related to adoptionism is the issue concerning the pre-existence of the Son. The general criticism is that Spirit Christology obviates the idea of a pre-existent Son of God. Starting from the pre-existence of the *Logos* has certain advantages. As Hook rightly points out, starting from the *Logos*, the pre-existent Son enabled the early Christians to speak about the uniqueness of Jesus and justify the worship of Jesus. Spirit Christologists in general do not take the pre-existent *Logos* or Son who descends to earth and assumes human flesh as the starting point for Christology. They start from the humanity of Jesus and ask what

⁴¹ Schoonenberg, *The Christ*, p. 93.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

is so unique and special about this man that we eventually came to confess and worship him as God and saviour? This is in fact the question of the divinity of Jesus.

How is the divinity of Jesus conceived in Spirit Christology? Is there a tendency in Spirit Christology to make Christ, in his humanity, the simple receptacle of the Spirit, thereby obscuring the divinity of Christ? The answer is that Spirit Christology sees Jesus' divinity in his humanity.⁴⁴ His humanity is the unique locus of the full presence of the divine Spirit. Jesus existed in the Spirit. It is seen in the ontological oneness with the divine Spirit right from conception until his death and resurrection and after the exaltation and glorification in the divine presence of historical Jesus in the communities and the cosmos.⁴⁵ The whole event of Spirit-filled life is the locus of Jesus' divinity.⁴⁶ He was conscious of his relation to the Spirit in the Gospels.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ This way of interpreting Jesus' divinity can also be seen in Wolfhart Pannenberg. According to him, "Jesus is the Son of God precisely in his humanity." W. Pannenberg, *Jesus – God and Man* (London: SCM, 1968), p. 336. Also, Klaus Runia points out that the Dutch theologian De Ellen Flesseman in her book *Believing Today* published in 1972 proposes a shift from 'God and man' understanding in Christology to God in man or God's presence in the man Jesus. Klaus Runia, *The Present-Day Christological Debate* (England: IVP, 1984), p. 67, citing *Believing Today*, pp. 95-98. J. A. T. Robinson suggests two sets of languages while speaking about Jesus. The empirical language that says Jesus is man and the language of faith that says Jesus is God for us. Runia, *The Present-Day Christological Debate*, pp. 70-71, citing J. A. T. Robinson, *The Human Face of God*, p. 116-117.

⁴⁵ Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 256.

⁴⁶ This way of interpreting the divinity of Jesus is seen in some of the contemporary theologians too. Ferdinand Baur sees Jesus' human consciousness as the locus of his divinity. This principle of consciousness of God-human unity is also a basis for human spirituality. Ralph Del Colle, 'Schleiermacher and Spirit Christology: Unexplored Horizons of the Christian Faith', *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 1 no. 3 (1999), 286-307, (p. 290), citing F. C. Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ, His Life and Work, His Epistles and His Doctrine, a Contribution to the Critical History of Primitive Christianity*, Vol. II (London: Williams and Norgate, 1875), pp. 161-2. In the same way, Paul Tillich says that the Spiritual presence in Jesus made him Christ. See John Charles Cooper, *The "Spiritual Presence" in the Theology of Paul Tillich: Tillich's Use of St. Paul* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1997). David Greenwood explains that Paul did not see "Jesus' divinity as a nature, but as the activity of God in Christ." David Greenwood, 'The Lord Is the Spirit: Some Considerations of 2 Cor 3:17', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 34 no. 4 (1972), 467-472, (p. 470), citing D. E. H. Whiteley, *The Theology of St. Paul* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), P. 123. Hence, by virtue of the anointing of the Spirit, Jesus would be called the Son of God.

⁴⁷ Throughout his life Jesus seems to have understood the empowerment of the Spirit to do his mission. It is through this realisation he grew in self-consciousness. See Luke 4: 24, 29; 13: 31-35; 6:20; Matt 11: 5; Luke 7:22; Matt 12:28 and Luke 11:20; Luke 7:16,39; 24:19; Matt 12:41 and Luke 11:32.

Although Spirit Christologies begin with the human Jesus, they do not end up there. This is clear in Moltmann's approach that perceives incarnation from the point of view of the resurrection and eschatology.⁴⁸ For him, the post-existence of Christ or the risen Christ provides the starting point for Christology.⁴⁹ If the identity of Jesus is retained after his death then Jesus who exists after the incarnation cannot be denied existence before it. God has raised Jesus from the dead means the existence of Christ as Lord acquires meaning and significance because of God's eschatological act in Jesus. This suggests then, "Jesus' identity is this eschatological identity. ... He is the Christ in the eschatological history of God, which brings about the end of this world of death and the beginning of the new creation. As 'the first born of the dead' (Rev 1.5) and 'the author of life' (Acts 3.15), he is God's Christ for the world. Jesus 'is' the Christ in this eschatological sense."⁵⁰

As we have seen in this approach, descending Christology and ascending Christology – Christology from above and Christology from below – match. It is only in the light of the resurrection-exaltation that the pre-existence of Jesus makes sense. The retroactive character of the resurrection proves helpful in understanding Christ as the Son of God from the very beginning of his earthly, human life. The resurrected Jesus becomes, in his

⁴⁸ Christologies that work with the doctrine of pre-existence do not take resurrection as decisive and important since in the *docetic* understanding of Christ the resurrection loses its meaning. As we have discussed earlier, this is one of the arguments of Hook against the *Logos* Christology (Refer to Chapter Two, pp. 54-55). Knox makes the same point. He says resurrection in pre-existent Christologies "fits smoothly within the continuous story of the divine Son of God, who undertook a mission among men and, having finished it, has returned to his Father, as it was inevitable he should." Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, p. 38. Thus, resurrection loses its significance. But in Spirit Christology resurrection is significant in understanding Jesus' centrality in history, uniqueness of Jesus' humanity, Jesus' mission but also eventually Jesus' oneness with God. Starting with the pre-existence of the Son possibly does not lead to such conclusion.

⁴⁹ Gerald O'Collins proposes a similar view. He says, "New Testament Christology properly began with the 'post-existent' Jesus. It took Good Friday and Easter Sunday (a) to disclose properly Christ's divine relationship to the Father in the Spirit and (b) to communicate that life, meaning and love which make us children of God. Hence, the end is where we start – with that climax of divine salvation and self-revelation which Christ's death and resurrection brought. From that midpoint Christology looks backwards (through Christ's life, the incarnation, the history of the Israelites and back to the creation), and forwards (through the coming of the Holy Spirit, the story of the Church, and on to the eschaton, the future consummation of all things)." Gerald O'Collins, *Interpreting Jesus* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983), p. 32.

⁵⁰ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 40.

exaltation, the Lord of the Spirit as Life-giving Spirit. Jesus is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Paul's idea that the risen Christ is the life-giving Spirit is traced back here to the beginning of Jesus' life.

The divine economy that is revealed in the life and work of Jesus reveals the ontological immanent Trinity. Functional Christology reveals the ontological Christology.

Christology from below reveals Christology from above. For example, as Weinandy says "the Father begetting his Son in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit becomes ... a temporal icon of his eternally begetting the Son by the Holy Spirit."⁵¹ Also, the visible descent of the Spirit at Jesus' baptism is revelatory in character rather than postulating an adoptionist Christology. Jesus' baptism reveals a Trinitarian pattern. The visible sign of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove resting on Jesus and the voice from heaven calling Jesus the beloved Son reveals the unity and distinction of the three persons in the Godhead.

So it is logical to argue that the temporal expression of the relationship between the Spirit and Jesus reveals his pre-existence and his eternal sonship. Likewise, Jesus' address to God as *abba* spoken in the Spirit reveals the eternal bond between the Father and the Son. The cross is another event where Jesus, handing over himself through the Spirit to God, reveals Jesus' eternal relationship with the Father.

Weinandy says,

... As Jesus on the cross offers his life to the Father through the Spirit, so in heaven he eternally, as Son, is wholly focused on the Father in the Spirit. This being Son to the Father, both on earth and in heaven, is possible only because as Son he is

⁵¹ Thomas G. Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), p. 42. Similarly, H. W. Robinson states that we speak of Christ's pre-existence from the revelation of his earthly life. See Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, pp. 276-277.

fashioned by the Spirit. It is in the Spirit that the Son is stamped or sealed in his subjectivity as son and so ever disposed to the Father in love.⁵²

In the end, resurrection proves the eternal sonship of Christ. The Father in the Spirit raises Jesus from the dead. "The resurrection, spanning as it does the temporal and the celestial (earthly dead body to heavenly glorified body), becomes the supreme icon of the eternal Trinitarian life."⁵³

Macquarrie summarises all that we have said so far in the following quotation.

The exploration of Christ's humanity in depth leads to the assertion of his deity. I have indicated that we begin from the human side, but this does not mean that we end there. We are following the same route as the first disciples, who began by joining themselves to a man, a rabbi from Nazareth. But there came a time when he was transfigured before them, when they saw him in a new depth and a new glory, and confessed his deity: 'We have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father' (Jn 1:14). The New Testament Christology follows a similar pattern. It begins with a kind of adoptionism. This is illustrated by the early preaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost, when he declares: 'Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified' (Acts 2:36). But it goes on to the incarnational theologies of Paul and John, in which the pre-existent Son or Word comes forth from the Father and becomes man. These two stories are not contradictory but complementary—indeed, each is needed to complete the other. There could only be the ascent of man to Godhood if already God had descended into his creation in order to give it this possibility.⁵⁴

If the Synoptics speak about the human Jesus, the fourth Gospel speaks about the pre-existent Christ. The fourth Gospel is the "silence of the Synoptics" says Robinson. And they need to be seen together to comprehend the mystery of Christ.⁵⁵ The Word-flesh Christology of the early church concentrated on the Word as the subject of the incarnation. The God-man type concentrates on the reality of his humanity. We need both these emphases in our Christology. Hence, Christology from below need not be condemned for

⁵² Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship*, p. 30, n. 11.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁵⁴ John Macquarrie, 'Some Problems of Modern Christology', *Indian Journal of Theology*, 23 (1974), 155-175, (p. 171).

⁵⁵ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 131.

not starting with the idea of pre-existence but it needs to be recognised, as Knox says, that it has “something special to say to us which classical Christology does not say with the same clarity.”⁵⁶ So much for adoptionism; however, the doctrine of pre-existence, has within itself the underlying idea of God as eternal and eternity is opposed to time, and this bears further investigation.

3.3.3 Time and Eternity

The inherent difficulty in *Logos* Christology is that God is outside time and unaffected by temporal pathos. We have discussed in the first chapter that Christianity took insights from the Platonic tradition and developed an understanding of time in opposition to temporality. It defined eternity as timelessness. Hence, the concept of the impassibility of God made it difficult to speak of God’s sufferings. Contemporary theologians react against the concept of eternity as timelessness. Pannenberg defines eternity as the totality of time. So eternity is the fullness that can be attained in the future.⁵⁷ Time does not lie outside God since eternity is defined in terms of the totality of time.⁵⁸ The future is significant for understanding the concept of time. Ted Peters argues, “God’s eternity is inclusive of world’s time.”⁵⁹ In his view,

One could construct a model of eternity as embracing temporality that has a yet-open future; that incorporates the redemption and transformation of nature and history, yet does not obviate the course of natural and historical events with the unnecessary positing of simultaneous viewing. One everlasting, plus a plan for eschatological salvation that catches past and present up into a new chapter in the story of reality.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, p. 57.

⁵⁷ Samuel M. Powell, *The Trinity in German Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 256-257.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

⁵⁹ Ted Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Louisville: J. Knox press, 1993), p. 147.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

Gunton explains that, for Jenson, the resurrection of Jesus offers a perspective to understand time and eternity. So the future holds the key to perceive a closer relation of God to history. “If God is conceived to exercise his sovereignty from open future rather than closed past, the whole doctrine of God is changed.”⁶¹

All these three views are interesting since they seem to focus on the future for interpreting the relationship between time and eternity. Moreover, with this, if we use Jenson’s expression that “the Spirit is the power of eschaton,”⁶² we can say that the Spirit is helpful in understanding the relationship between time and eternity. This is where Spirit Christology proves its richness by seeing the Spirit’s role in the Christ–event. The Spirit, the power of the eschaton gives the Christ–event an eschatological dimension. When pre–existence is seen from the end, from the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, eternity is not seen outside time. It is seen in the power of divine future in transforming the old creation into new. Ted Peters says, “In Christ we also find the resurrection, the prolepsis of the new creation.”⁶³ Although the Spirit Christologists do not go as far as discussing the issue of the relationship between time and eternity, their contribution (Zizioulas) that Spirit makes Christology eschatological leads us to suggest that Spirit Christology is helpful in bringing a new interpretation of the Christ–event which is not influenced by the Greek idea of the impassibility of God.

3.3.4 The Divinity of Jesus

Therefore, as we said earlier, in Spirit Christology, the divinity of Jesus and the distinction between Jesus and us lies not in his pre–existence but in his Spirit–filled life, in the union

⁶¹ Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, p. 127.

⁶² Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology I: The Triune God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 101.

⁶³ Peters, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life*, p. 175.

of the human spirit with the divine Spirit.⁶⁴ If eternity includes time then divinity and humanity are not opposed to each other.⁶⁵ This is the point made in Coffey's reinterpretation of *enhypostasia*. The reinterpretation of *enhypostasia* affirms that in Jesus Christ the whole fullness of Godhead lives bodily. God's Word has become flesh in Jesus. Coffey and Schoonenberg see the divine and human to be mutual and reciprocal.

Schoonenberg says:

... At first sight, divinity and humanity seem to be inversely proportional to each other. The more divinity, the less humanity, and *vice versa*. Divinity at the cost of humanity in Logos Christology, humanity at the cost of divinity in Spirit Christology. This, however, is a false appearance. If God really is the creator, he and his creatures never can be working in an inverse proportion; they never operate as supplementing each other, let alone as competing with each other.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ At this point, it is worth mentioning that the unexplored term *kyriakos anthropos* that was used in the writings of the early church theologians suggests some interesting points about the relationship between divine and human in Christ. Grillmeier observes that in the Christology of the post-Nicene and post-Chalcedonian periods, the term *kyriakos anthropos* (*homo dominicus* in Latin and 'the dominical man' in English) was applied for the human reality of Jesus Christ which has not been fully explored. Alois Grillmeier, 'Jesus Christ, the Kyriakos Anthropos', *Theological Studies*, 38 no. 2 (1977), 275-293, (p. 275). In *Epistula ad Antiochenos*, which is attributed to Marcellus of Ancyra (d. c. 374), this term designates Christ the exalted and glorified man after his resurrection and ascension who, is now sitting at the right hand of the Father. Grillmeier, 'Jesus Christ, the Kyriakos Anthropos', p. 280. However, *Kyriakos anthropos* in the writings of Didymus of Alexandria and Epiphanius is applied to Christ's earthly existence. Grillmeier, 'Jesus Christ, the Kyriakos Anthropos', p. 282. So Christ is called 'the man of the Lord,' that is, the manhood of the Lord." Grillmeier, 'Jesus Christ, the Kyriakos Anthropos', p. 292. Mark the Hermit applies *Kyriakos anthropos* to Christ's earthly and exalted state. He sees the divinity of Christ in his human existence. Christ is the perfect *kyriotes*. So Grillmeier concludes this Christology is based on "the union of divinity and humanity in Jesus Christ." Grillmeier, 'Jesus Christ, the Kyriakos Anthropos', p. 283.

⁶⁵ Similarly, Duncan Watson says if "God's eternity and our time are not contraries, excluding each other; rather, our time finds its basis in God's eternity. One will argue in a similar way in regard to the various other attributes. In other words, God's attributes do not exclude him from the world; they relate him to the world – and if they do not he ceases to be God in any real sense..." Watson, 'Why Chalcedon?' (p. 8). But this issue of relationship between time and eternity goes back to Lampe's presupposition of close relationship between the Creator and creatures. The contrast between the Creator and creatures was maintained in the Chalcedonian definition that made it imperative to speak of the *hypostatatic* union of divinity and humanity in Christ as "distinctive existence of the two natures, each keeping its inalienable characteristics." John Meyendorff, 'Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 27 no. 1 (1983), 27-37, (p. 28). See also Meyendorff, 'Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology', p. 35; John Meyendorff, 'Philosophy, Theology, Palamism and "Secular Christianity"', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 10 no. 4 (1966), 203-208, (p. 206).

⁶⁶ Piet J. A. M. Schoonenberg, 'Spirit Christology and Logos Christology', *Bijdragen*, 38 (1977), 350-375, (p. 361). Similarly, Duncan Watson asks, "How can God and man seen as opposites get together at all (let alone in Christ)? And for a large part of western tradition, in neo-Platonism, as well as of other religious traditions, that is a real question and is solved by saying they do not! The neo-Platonist 'One' (lurking behind much patristic and medieval theology, not to mention behind some modern philosophy of religion) is ultimately defined in negatives – non-being. He cannot create, he cannot act, he cannot rule. He can only be reached in some mysterious and inexplicable way, which assumes the ultimate oneness of the One and the human soul. The problem here is that the human being and his world seem to be sacrificed; and one really must ask: is this truly a God of this world who remains a God of this world which still remains this world with real human beings in it?" Watson, 'Why Chalcedon?' (p. 7). He further says, the real intention of Chalcedon is to show that "in the person of Jesus Christ God relates definitively and decisively to the world,

However, there is a distinction between Jesus and us. Jesus' divine Sonship is also linked to the eschatological working of the Spirit. That is why he could communicate the Spirit to his followers. Thus, like *Logos* Christology, Spirit Christology can maintain the qualitative difference of Jesus from humans. It shows the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit is not just functional but also ontological.⁶⁷ This needs some more clarification. This will be clear as we deal with the next question concerning pneumatocentrism and Christocentrism.

3.3.5 Pneumatocentrism or Christocentrism?

In Spirit Christology, does the Spirit replace Christ? All the three approaches to Spirit Christology that we have discussed affirm that, without pneumatology, Christological reflection is not possible. The highest revelation of the Spirit is perceived in the human personality of Jesus.⁶⁸ Hence, Christ's humanity can be said to be "the vehicle of the Spirit."⁶⁹ But a pneumatological emphasis does not minimise the significance of Christ. As Heron says, "Christology itself requires pneumatology not in order to be 'less

without separation or division, without confusion or change. In Jesus Christ God is the God who relates to the world and will not abandon it; he binds himself to it, and he gives it his life." Watson, 'Why Chalcedon?' pp. 8-9.

⁶⁷ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 150, citing Schoonenberg, 'Spirit Christology and Logos Christology', p. 366. Thus this emphasis of Spirit Christology also enables us to speak of Christ's divinity as "divinity in relationship" O'Collins, *Interpreting Jesus*, p. 179. This is to say that Christ is divine through his relationship to the Father in the Holy Spirit. This gives Trinitarian basis for Christology. As Weinandy states, "the one Godhead resides in and is the interrelationship among the persons, and not just in the Father alone." Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship*, p. 10. This is the point that the complementary approaches of Spirit Christology make, that is to place Christology in a Trinitarian framework. We avoid the language such as 'hypostatic union' and 'Christ is of one substance with God' to interpret the divinity of Christ. Divinity understood in terms of relationship maintains certain autonomy of each member of the Trinity and interrelationship with one another.

⁶⁸ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 137.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

christocentric' but precisely in order to be Christology, the doctrine of Jesus as the Christ, the one anointed with the Spirit."⁷⁰

Therefore, there is no question of Christocentrism or pneumatocentrism. Kilian McDonnell says, "Both Christ and the Spirit are at the center, but in ways appropriate to each."⁷¹ Spirit Christology speaks not in terms of 'centrism' but rather in terms of mutuality between Christ and the Spirit. For example, Hook speaks about the union between the divine Spirit and the human spirit in Jesus. There is mutuality between the two yet the individualities and subjectivities are not lost. As McDonnell puts it, "The Spirit and Jesus retain their identities even while each is present and operative at the interior of the other."⁷² Hence, the Spirit has Christological reference and Christ has pneumatological reference.

In other words, every Christological statement has a pneumatological counterpart and every pneumatological statement has a Christological counterpart. The Spirit is Christocentric and Christ is Pneumatocentric. Christ points to the Spirit and the Spirit points to Christ.⁷³ The story of the Spirit can come through the story of Christ.⁷⁴ The role

⁷⁰ Alasdair I. C. Heron, *The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit in the Bible, in the History of Christian Thought and in Recent Theology* (London: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1983), p. 127.

⁷¹ Kilian McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' *Theological Studies*, 46 (1985), 191-227, (p. 189).

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 203.

⁷³ Boris Bobrinskoy speaking from the perspective of creation shows the simultaneity of Spirit and Word in work of creation in line with Irenaeus' concept of Spirit and Word as two hands of the Father at work in creating the world. Boris Bobrinskoy, 'The Holy Spirit – in the Bible and the Church', *The Ecumenical Review*, 41 no. 3 (1989), 357-362, (pp. 358-359). He says, "the fundamental revelation of the gospel of Jesus is this mutual service and dual testimony of Christ in the Spirit and of the Spirit in Christ; the dual action of the Father in the world by the Word and the Breath, by the Son and the Spirit, 'the two hands of the Father' opening to embrace a fallen creation and closing to lead a renewed creation towards the Father." Bobrinskoy, 'The Holy Spirit – in the Bible and the Church', p. 361. This supports our point that the earthly life of Jesus' association with the Spirit demonstrates the eternal association of the Son with the Spirit. We do not argue that economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity but at least we get an understanding of it in the economy of God in this world.

⁷⁴ Ellen Flesseman-van Leer, "I Believe in the Holy Spirit", *The Ecumenical Review*, 41 no. 3 (1989), 348-356, (p. 350).

of the Spirit in Christology does not displace Christ. "If there is a Christological concentration to Pneumatology, there is a Pneumatological concentration to Christology."⁷⁵

Lampe, while appealing for the 'Spirit let loose in the world,' seeks a criterion in the Spirit-filled Christ. In this way, Spirit and Christ are related and distinguished. Christ becomes a central figure, an ideal, a focal point in history and serves as the criterion for the Spirit who is let loose in the world. However, there is an indication of forward thrust and movement in the activity of the Spirit. Zizioulas speaks about the simultaneity of the economies of the Son and the Spirit. Christ becomes history. The Spirit is beyond history and brings the eschaton into history. In this view, the Spirit and Christ relate to each other yet the Spirit is placed in the eschatological setting.

Congar argues for the Christological criteria for the action of the Spirit. The Spirit carries on the mission of Christ.⁷⁶ In his view, the soundness of Pneumatology lies in its Christological reference.⁷⁷ Yet without the Spirit the Christological mission is barren. The Spirit is also placed in the context of the future.⁷⁸ "The experience of the Spirit is never without the remembrance of Christ, and never without the expectation of his future."⁷⁹

The mutuality between the Spirit and Christ suggest two things. Firstly, pneumatological Christology sees Christology from the pneumatological perspective and this theological

⁷⁵ Kilian McDonnell, 'Theological Presuppositions in Our Preaching about the Spirit', *Theological Studies*, 59 (1998), 219-235, (p. 226).

⁷⁶ Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2 (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983), p. 210.

⁷⁷ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 141.

⁷⁸ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, pp. 210-211, referring to John 16:13.

⁷⁹ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 17.

reflection will not be complete until pneumatology is also seen from the Christological perspective. Heron asks "Must room not somehow be found, to affirm a double relationship between the Son and Spirit which is as ultimate in the life of God as in the work of salvation?"⁸⁰ The sending of the Son by the Spirit (Lk 1:35; 4:18; Mk 1:12; Mt 4:1; 12-17-18) and the sending of the Spirit by the Son (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:5-8; Jn 15:26; 16:7) mutually interpret each other.⁸¹ Thus, pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology are mutually interactive and seen in the framework of the Trinitarian structure.

Secondly, there is an indication that the Christological criterion in no way controls the activities of the Spirit. The Spirit is called the other *Paraclete*. The term *Paraclete* means advocate, the one who defends, the one who helps, one who proves the world guilty, the one who comforts, the one who intercedes. He is the witness, revealer, interpreter and the one who leads us into truth. It has a variety of meaning and no single meaning will exhaust the richness of meaning associated with the term, *Paraclete*.⁸²

However, the Spirit as other *Paraclete* does not eliminate the difference between the Spirit and Christ. Jesus Christ is "the revelation of the Spirit"⁸³ and the Spirit is present in the community as other *Paraclete* who continues Christ's work.⁸⁴ "The presence of the Spirit is truly the continued presence of Christ in another mode."⁸⁵ Yet, it is not categorically Spirit or Christ although both have their identities since "the concept of the Spirit is itself

⁸⁰ Heron, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 177.

⁸¹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 45.

⁸² See Raymond E. Brown, 'The Gospel according to John xiii-xxi', *The Anchor Bible*, (New York: Doubleday, 1970) pp. 1135-1143. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, pp. 54-56.

⁸³ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 117.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁸⁵ George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (London: SCM, 1957), p. 22.

profoundly modified by the new union.”⁸⁶ Perhaps this is the reason why Paul uses ‘in Christ’ and ‘in the Spirit’ interchangeably.⁸⁷ They “interpret each other reciprocally.”⁸⁸ Therefore, in order to understand Christ it is necessary to reflect on the Spirit and in order to understand the Spirit it is necessary to reflect on the role of the Spirit in the earthly life of Jesus.⁸⁹

The expression ‘Spirit of Christ’ in Paul’s writings indicates that the Spirit has acquired “a new Christological determination and is for ever united to the mystery of Christ.”⁹⁰ The resurrected body of Jesus is a transformed body of “pneumatic existence.”⁹¹ The Spirit makes Christ a *Pneuma zōopoioun*, a spiritual being giving life.”⁹² For this reason Paul attributes Christian life, either to Christ or to the Spirit since Christ became the ‘life-giving Spirit’ (I Cor 15:45).⁹³ This in fact implies that “A new and rich content was given to the energies of the Spirit, and this content was nothing less than the whole personality of Jesus Christ.”⁹⁴

⁸⁶ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 135.

⁸⁷ Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 256, referring to Rom 8:9; Phil 1:19; Gal 4:6; I Cor 12:3. Also refers to Lk 24:49; Acts 2:33; Jn 15:26; 16:7; 20:22; Jn 14:26; 16:13f. See also Wong, ‘The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus’, p. 58; Alwyn Marriage, *Life-Giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God* (London: SPCK, 1989), p. 35, referring to Rom 8:11; Gal 2:20. Alwyn Marriage observes that this kind of mutuality occurs in Jesus’ instruction to his disciples. Jesus says to them that the Holy Spirit will teach them what to say in times of difficulties (Lk 12:12) and Jesus also says he himself will give them wisdom to speak (Lk 21:15). Marriage, *Life-Giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God*, pp. 35-36.

⁸⁸ Wong, ‘The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus’, p. 59.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71, referring to I Cor 15.44.

⁹² Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 39.

⁹³ Haight explains that in Dunn’s view, the Spirit Christology in the early communities developed in two stages. The first stage “sees Jesus during his life time as one in whom God as Spirit was at work. The second stage or dimension of Spirit Christology applies to the risen Jesus, the Jesus alive, with God, and called the Christ. In this stage there is at times a kind of identity or conflation of Christ risen and the Spirit.” Haight, ‘The Case for Spirit Christology’, p. 270, referring to Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 129-62. Haight also observes that on the basis of two stages of development Dunn also criticises Lampe’s Christology as reductionist since Lampe does not take the second stage of development into consideration. Haight, ‘The Case for Spirit Christology’, p. 271, citing Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, pp. 266-67.

⁹⁴ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 136.

Returning to the point that we made earlier, concerning the Christological criteria for the activity of the Spirit, we must add that, although Christological criteria are set for the activity of the Spirit, the concept of the Spirit itself is enriched by the mutuality between Christ and the Spirit. In addition, since the Spirit is oriented towards the future, it sets us in a mode that is beyond concepts, logicalities and set definitions for the activities of the Spirit. The Spirit and Christ are mutual. The Spirit gives identity to Christ and Christ sends out the Spirit. Yet, the Spirit goes beyond history into a future not confined to the Word alone but expressed in 'unspeakable' words. Haight says that in Dunn's analysis of Christology in the New Testament there is "no single coherent understanding or presentation of Christ which meets us after Easter."⁹⁵ Perhaps it is suitable to call it "non-identical repetition of revelation"⁹⁶ to use D' Costa's expression. The Spirit is set in the open future yet with a Christological reference. Therefore, we endorse neither christomonism that may ignore and neglect the creative energy of the Spirit in the world nor the autonomy of the Spirit that tends to displace the Trinity with an exclusive monotheism. Christology and pneumatology are not two separate economies of God's relationship with humanity. The *hypostatic* distinction between the Word and the Spirit indicate that there is difference and plurality in terms of God's dealings with people. Within one divine economy of salvation, there is a creative and constructive tension between the centrality of Christ event and the universal activity of the Spirit. And Moltmann writes,

The mutual relationship between pneumatology and Christology must be viewed as a fundamental principle of Christian theology. But this ecumenical requirement can be met only if Christomonism is given up, and if enthusiastic pneumatomania is avoided, and if both Christology and pneumatology are seen in the framework of a

⁹⁵ Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology', p. 271, citing James D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity*, 2nd edn (London: SCM Press, 1990), p. 216.

⁹⁶ Gavin D' Costa, *The Meeting of Religions and the Trinity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), p. 122.

Trinitarian structure that embraces both. This preserves theocentrism from either christocentrism or pneumatocentrism.⁹⁷

This takes us to our final question about Trinity.

3.3.6 The Trinity

How does the Mutuality of Christological pneumatology and pneumatological Christology determine our very conception of the doctrine of the Trinity? Since the doctrine of the Trinity cannot be separated from Christological issues as Brian Hebblethwaite claims, the link between incarnation and the doctrine of the Trinity becomes of paramount importance.⁹⁸

Firstly, we have the issue of *filioque* that is said to be the cause of the divide between the East and the West. The insight expressed in the *filioque* is that the Spirit is common to both the Father and the Son.⁹⁹ And, as Jenson says, the insight of the *filioque* cannot be abandoned, for “in the biblical narrative, the Spirit indeed comes to us not only from the Father but also from the Son.”¹⁰⁰ But the processional framework within which it is given brings a problem.¹⁰¹ The East is not free from this since it follows a linear and

⁹⁷ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 72.

⁹⁸ Brian Hebblethwaite, “Recent British Theology”, in *One God in Trinity*, Peter Toon and James D. Spiceland eds. (London: Samuel Bagster, 1980), pp. 158-170, (p. 158).

⁹⁹ Congar explains that this is obvious in Augustine’s interpretation. According to Augustine, the Spirit is of both the Father and the Son. “According to Mt 10:20 and Rom 8:11, the Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and, according to Gal 4:6 and Rom 8:9, the Spirit is the Spirit of the Son (that is, of Christ). Although the Spirit is quite distinct, the Spirit is therefore what is common to the Father and the Son. The Spirit is their shared holiness and their love. The unity of the Spirit is established by the bond of peace.” Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 78, referring to *De Trinitate*, XV, 27, 48.

¹⁰⁰ Robert W. Jenson, *The Triune Identity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), p. 150, referring to John 20:22.

¹⁰¹ For Augustine, the Spirit is the mutual love between the Father and the Son. So the Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. Since the Son derives his being from the Father, the Holy Spirit proceeds first from the Father. The origin of the Spirit is the Father. But the Spirit also proceeds from the Son. So *filioque* is a necessity for Augustine. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 79.

processional model too.¹⁰² We observed this problem in Zizioulas' interpretation of Trinity. The real issue here is Trinitarian taxonomy. The monarchy of the Father or the Father as the cause or origin is kept intact in the linear model. The Father is the first principle, origin and the source of divinity. Personal distinctions are made clear. Relationships cannot be changed. The Father cannot be the Son and the Son cannot be the Father. The relations are kept in order. But if we take into consideration the mutuality of pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology and say "the Spirit complements the filioque,"¹⁰³ the understanding of the Trinity takes a different shape. This is indicated in Coffey's mutual love theory. The Father, Son and the Spirit constitute one another. Trinity is understood in terms of relationships.¹⁰⁴ The Monarchy of the Father disappears, neat geometry of Trinity disappears and as Jenson says, life is not after all a neat geometry¹⁰⁵ and, as Johnson says, "the Trinity is itself an analogy referring to divine

¹⁰² Johnson says, "If the Spirit proceeds from the Father as the East confesses, or from the Father and the Son as is believed in the West, either way the metaphor of proceeding in its human usage implies a priority of the origin of the procession, since what proceeds inevitably 'comes after,' either chronologically or ontologically." Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 2000), p. 143.

¹⁰³ Barbara Finan, 'The Holy Spirit: An Issue in Theology', *Spirituality Today*, 38 (1986), 9-18, (p. 14). The 'Agreed Statement on the Holy Trinity' that had been reached on 13 March 1991 between Reformed and Orthodox Churches states that the Trinitarian persons "completely contain and interpenetrate while remaining what they distinctively are in their otherness as Father, Son and the Holy Spirit." T. F. Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), p. 125. So the monarchy of the Father is not meaningful as "each Person is perfectly and wholly God." Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement*, pp. 112-113.

¹⁰⁴ Mühlen also interprets Trinitarian mystery of God as existing only in relation. Moltmann argues that Trinitarian relationships are circular and dynamic. He writes: "Before the resurrection the sequence reads Father-Spirit-Son, for the Spirit is so powerfully active in the birth, baptism and passing over of Jesus' life in death and resurrection that Jesus can be said to live from the works of the creative Spirit. After the resurrection the order becomes Father-Son-Spirit, for Jesus is now made a life-giving Spirit and himself joins in the sending of the Spirit to the community of disciples. Finally, when we consider the eschatological transformation of creation the sequence becomes Spirit-Son-Father, for the Spirit is the power of the new creation and brings all to rebirth. In this last sequence the Spirit is not the energy proceeding from the Father or the Son, but the glorifying God from whom Father and Son receive their glory; the unifying God who gives them their union; the active subject from whom Father and Son receive the world as their home." Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 195, citing Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* (London: SCM, 1981), pp. 89, 126.

¹⁰⁵ Jenson, *The Triune God*, p. 161.

livingness.”¹⁰⁶ The language of mutuality and reciprocity gives room for dynamism and creativity than the language of begetting and proceeding.¹⁰⁷

Such dynamism of mutuality takes us beyond even the division between the immanent and economic Trinity. We are not saying that the immanent Trinity is economic Trinity as Rahner proposed¹⁰⁸ or the economic Trinity is everything and there is nothing more than that, as Catherine Mowry LaCugna proposed.¹⁰⁹ Rather we are attempting a different language that is non-dichotomous.

As D’Costa says there is self-disclosure and hiddenness in God.¹¹⁰ There is a relation between economic and immanent Trinity. We understand the immanent Trinity through the economic Trinity yet the mutuality of economies of the Son and the Spirit signify the richness of revelation that makes it difficult to know God fully, as he is.

D’Costa expresses the limitations to our knowledge of the Triune God:

The hiddenness and concealedness of God’s self-revealing is part of revelation’s *eschatological dimension*. As St. Paul reminds us, despite the glory that we have beheld in Christ, we now ‘see in a glass dimly’ (I Cor. 13:12). St. John of course is also vividly aware of this tension, so that even while he confesses that the ‘Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth’ (Jn 1:14), nevertheless, in

¹⁰⁶ Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 205.

¹⁰⁷ Torrance says, “The Father is not properly Father apart from the Son and the Spirit, and the Son is not properly Son apart from the Father and the Spirit, and the Spirit is not properly Spirit apart from the Father and the Son. This understanding of subsistent coinherent relations in God sets the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit on a rather different basis...” Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement*, pp. 141-142.

¹⁰⁸ John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 26, citing Rahner, *The Trinity*, p. 21ff. *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, p. 137. For a critique of Rahner’s rule, refer to Sanders Fred, ‘Entangled in the Trinity: Economic and Immanent Trinity in Recent Theology’, *Dialogue*, 40 no. 3 (2001), 175-182, (pp. 175-182).

¹⁰⁹ Catherine Mowry LaCugna giving importance to God’s action in the world says that any talk about immanent Trinity even when it is derived from the economic Trinity must be rejected. Trinity is found in the human community. She does not locate *Perichoretic* relationship of the Trinity either in immanent Trinity or in the economic Trinity but in the human communion. See Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1993), p. 274.

¹¹⁰ Gavin D’Costa, ‘Revelation and Revelations: Discerning God in Other Religions. Beyond a Static Valuation’, *Modern Theology*, 10 no. 2 (1994), 165-183, (p. 167).

the farewell discourses, the disciples are told that they cannot fully bear the 'many things' Jesus brings, so 'when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth' (Jn 16: 12-13). This eschatological dimension to revelation is highly significant...¹¹¹

3.4 For Further Reflection

We shall take some additional pertinent themes such as Christological language, the *apatheia* of God and the question of suffering, pneumatological anthropology and the epistemic character of the Spirit, for further attention.

3.4.1 Spirit Christology and Christological Language

Spirit Christology aims at comprehending the richness of the mystery of Incarnation. *Logos* Christology presents Christ in paradoxical terms and this is not denied in Spirit Christology for it acknowledges that the mystery of Incarnation is unfathomable and there is an *apophatic* dimension¹¹² to this. Moltmann speaking about theological language says that this *apophatic* dimension does not mean any restriction of knowledge, or any impoverishment of thinking. On the contrary, it means that knowing is set free in "the broad place" of God's Spirit "who searches out even the depths of the Godhead"; and it means that thinking is "immeasurably enriched."¹¹³ Since Spirit has a different dynamism that goes beyond Word, Spirit Christology could possibly open itself up to oral culture, art,

¹¹¹ D'Costa, 'Revelation and Revelations: Discerning God in Other Religions. Beyond a Static Valuation', pp. 167-168. The 'Agreed Statement on the Holy Trinity' between Reformed and Orthodox Churches state that "the Holy Trinity is a mystery that is beyond human comprehension and the Unity of Trinity and the Trinity in Unity rest not on an abstract essence but on the very being of God who reveals as I am who I am or I shall be who I shall be which is the revelation given by the Son and the Spirit." Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement*, pp. 111-112. Similarly, Congar is of the view that the economic Trinity cannot exhaust the immanent Trinity. Yves M. J. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, trans. by David Smith (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983), pp. 13-15.

¹¹² In this aspect, Spirit Christology seems to be in line with the Eastern tradition that accentuates the *apophatic* approach in contrast to the Western Tradition. The Western tradition "bases itself on the analogy of being (*analogia entis*) to discover in God—the-supreme-being the qualities that He put in His creation" whereas the Eastern Tradition "uses the so-called *apophatic* approach to the Mystery of God." Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'East Meets West: Gifts of the Eastern to the Whole Church', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37 no. 1 3-22, (p. 3).

¹¹³ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 73.

drama, story, music and so on as media for articulating Christology. In the Spirit dimension, not doctrine or statement but experience is found meaningful and relevant by narration, testimony and articulating God in non-verbal expressions including silence.

3.4.2 The *Apatheia* of God and the Question of Suffering

As we have seen in the first chapter of this study, the common concern in the early Christological discussions was to preserve the impassibility of God.¹¹⁴ This difficulty is alleviated in Spirit Christology. For the Hebrews, the breath of God is life-energy (Ex 15:8-10; Ps 33:6), the one that animates.¹¹⁵ The Spirit of God refers to the action of God. Through his breath or Spirit, God reveals himself as life-giving and animating everything, raising leaders, kings, heroes, judges, prophets and wisemen.¹¹⁶ Spirit Christology sees Jesus in this tradition of the dynamic act of the Spirit. Jesus is perceived as the Messiah who was anointed with the Spirit of God since the anointing and the messiahship are linked.¹¹⁷ The anointed one brings good news to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, liberty to the oppressed.¹¹⁸ The idea of the suffering servant is linked to the Messianic mission of Jesus.¹¹⁹ As Moltmann explains,

The image of the suffering servant of God in Isaiah 53 put a profound impress on the stories about Christ's passion, and became the foundation for Christian christologies. With the help of this image we first of all discover along Jesus' way to his death on the cross a *solidarity Christology*: the messianic Son of God unreservedly takes on himself the conditions of our vulnerable and mortal existence, and becomes a human being like us. He takes the way of non-violent suffering. He carries and endures – suffers and suffers under – injustice and

¹¹⁴ The rejection of the doctrines of the immutability and the impassibility of God is a "theological commonplace" today. For various arguments on suffering of Christ and the passibility of God see Marcel Sarot, 'Suffering of Christ, Suffering of God?' *Theology*, xciv no. 764 (1992), 113-119, (pp. 113-119).

¹¹⁵ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

¹¹⁷ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 7, referring to Isa 11:1ff. 'And the Spirit of the lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord and (he will inspire him with) the fear of the Lord....'

¹¹⁸ Lk 4:18-19; compare with Isa 11:4; 42:1; 32:15ff.

¹¹⁹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 8.

violence, betrayal and denial, forsakenness by God and human beings, and dies on a Roman cross.¹²⁰

Spirit Christology over against the *apatheia* of classical notion of God denotes *pathos* with respect to God. The human and cosmic world is the focus of God's concern and redemption. How to bring faith, justice and good news to the poor and the underprivileged is a pertinent question whatever society we live in. Jesus, as the one who is anointed and filled with the Spirit without measure, shows forth the tender *pathos* of the Spirit is the answer from the Spirit Christology. As Johnson remarks, the Spirit is "the mystery of God closer to us than we are to ourselves, drawing and passing by in quickening, liberating compassion."¹²¹

Spirit Christology takes history and revelation seriously. God reveals himself in history. Christ offered himself to God through eternal Spirit (Heb 9:14) shows that God is into the very fabric of historical events. The Spirit enables us to discern God's interventions in history. The Spirit poured out on all flesh and the Word made flesh go together, and they show that God is revealed in history and is at work in history, society and communities. For Moltmann, the suffering of God involves the suffering and pain of human beings. "Since Father and Son love and are open to the world, this history of God with man is inclusive of all human suffering."¹²² He presents a God in an encounter with the world and this challenges the notions of divine simplicity and impassibility. It is out of Christ's suffering that a new creation is born.¹²³ Christ's pathos is the pathos of the Spirit. Thus,

¹²⁰Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 130. In similar vein, Jenson asks, "Is it not the teaching of Judaism that God dwells with God's people and accompanies them through all things, even into exile? Is not Christianity, moreover, but a continuation of this ancient Hebrew faith in God with us, yet with the further specification that God's embodiment has now been made real in one particular child of Israel?" Jenson, *The Triune God*, pp. 75-80.

¹²¹ Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 131.

¹²² John Thompson, *Modern Trinitarian Perspectives*, p. 61.

¹²³ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1990), pp. 180-181.

Spirit Christology combats the notion of the impossibility of God that is inherent in *Logos* Christology.

3.4.3 Pneumatological Anthropology

We have noticed two types of Christologies in the early church namely, the Word–flesh or *Logos*–flesh type and the Word–man type. These two types presuppose two types of anthropologies. In the Word–flesh type the focus is on the union of the Word with human flesh. The Word replaces the human soul in Christ. Kelly observes that this comes from the “Platonic conception of man as a body animated by a soul or spirit which was essentially alien from it.”¹²⁴ The Word–man type focuses on the union between the Word and the humanity of Jesus Christ. In this type, the *Logos* in no way replaces the soul of Christ. Kelly says that this thinking has roots in “the Aristotelian theory of man as a psycho–physical unity, and also the determination to do justice to the genuinely human character of the Figure delineated in the Gospels.”¹²⁵

Spirit Christology presupposes a Pneumato–centric anthropology since “pneumatology is inseparable from theological anthropology.”¹²⁶ Following Hebrew thought, Lampe and Hook argue that there is certain kinship between the divine Spirit and the human spirit. Hebrew thought conceives of “God as actively present in human consciousness and life.”¹²⁷ Human existence itself is the inspiration of divine breath since “the life–breath of man was ascribed to the creative inspiration of Yahweh...”¹²⁸ This is the meaning of human spirit or soul (*nephesh*) in Hebrew thought. In Ps 51: 10-12 we find a certain

¹²⁴ J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th rev. edn (London: A & C Black, 1958), p. 281.

¹²⁵ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p. 281.

¹²⁶ Finan, 'The Holy Spirit: An Issue in Theology', p. 16.

¹²⁷ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 123.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 122-123.

affinity between divine Spirit and human spirit. C. F. D. Moule comments that the author of this psalm sees *ruach* as part of him.¹²⁹ If the divine Spirit had not been offered as a gift to humanity then life in the Spirit would have become impossible.¹³⁰

According to H. W. Robinson, "Spirit is interpretable in terms of personality, our highest category; our knowledge of God as Spirit must always be based on the assumption that there is real kinship between the human spirit and the divine."¹³¹ He points out that one of the meanings of the Spirit is that the Spirit signifies the whole physical life of human beings "usually regarded on its higher side."¹³² In his view, the inter-relation of Spirit to spirit or divine and human co-existence goes back to prophetic consciousness. It means, "the heightening of all human powers, the clarifying of human vision and judgement, the strengthening of the human will..."¹³³ There is always a downward movement to human spirit on the part of the divine Spirit. Likewise, there is an upward movement on the part of human spirit to the divine Spirit to "share some higher conception of the meaning of life."¹³⁴

Likewise, G. S. Hendry points out the real possibility of communion between human spirit and divine Spirit. Divine Spirit does not displace the human spirit and the human spirit is so open and receptive that it gives way to the divine Spirit. In his view, this intercommunion can be understood in the light of Rom 8:16 where the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.¹³⁵ In John V. Taylor's view, the

¹²⁹ C. F. D. Moule, *The Holy Spirit* (London: Continuum, 2000), p. 8.

¹³⁰ Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', p. 72.

¹³¹ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 285.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹³⁵ Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, pp. 115, 117.

Spirit urges every creature to *higher consciousness* and personhood.¹³⁶ Spirit creates spontaneity, creativity; Spirit sets people free and makes people responsible for making choices. William P. Alston remarks that the Scripture gives ample evidence of back and forth divine communication with humans.¹³⁷ "People are experientially aware of God, that God presents Himself to their experience in various ways and thereby provides them with an empirical basis for beliefs about His presence and activity."¹³⁸

The union between the divine Spirit and the human spirit does not take away the individuality of a person. In such interaction "we are conscious of something that is both ours and His, without 'interference' with either activity; the very quality of the experience is in this reciprocity."¹³⁹ There is no merging of the human spirit with the Divine Spirit. God does not replace human faculties, "God's substance does not replace our substance."¹⁴⁰ In the communication between divine and human, the human faculties are not diminished.¹⁴¹

Christ is the revelation of such personal union. In Christ his human personality is not diminished by such "personal intercourse."¹⁴² The revelation of Spirit through Jesus only shows that in him individuality, morality and religious aspiration attained its highest

¹³⁶ John V. Taylor, *The Go-between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission* (London: SCM, 1972), p. 7.

¹³⁷ William P. Alston, *Divine Nature and Human Language: Essays in Philosophical Theology* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 7, referring to Exo 3:9-14; 4:10-12.

¹³⁸ Alston, *Divine Nature and Human Language: Essays in Philosophical Theology*, p. 7.

¹³⁹ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 102. In the Orthodox tradition, the human being's essential distinctiveness lies in his or her openness towards God and a potentiality to grow and participate in divine life. So the Image of God is not seen in terms of a static quality but in terms of dynamic growth and communion with God. There is no opposition between nature and grace since human nature is perceived in its internal relationship to God. Meyendorff, 'Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology', pp. 34-35. In other words, "...man was originally created with the Holy Spirit, i.e. divine life, as part of man's natural existence..." Meyendorff, 'Philosophy, Theology, Palamism and "Secular Christianity"', p. 204.

¹⁴⁰ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 32, referring to Rom 8:26, 14-15.

¹⁴¹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 32.

¹⁴² Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 119.

degree.¹⁴³ “The Synoptic portrait of Jesus in particular shows a person of marked individuality, unmistakable for any other character of history.”¹⁴⁴

3.4.4 The Epistemological Role of the Spirit

Spirit Christology conceives of the Holy Spirit as the indweller. The Holy Spirit rested on Jesus or indwelt Jesus. When we speak about the union between the Spirit and Jesus, we mean that the mediation between God and the man Jesus happens in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the link as well as the ontological principle. Taylor calls the Spirit the “current of communication,” “a Go-Between.”¹⁴⁵ The Spirit is the link between Jesus and God. The Spirit is also the link between risen Lord and humanity for the Spirit enables us to confess that Jesus is Lord (I Cor 12:3). It is through the Spirit we know and experience Christ. Kasper thinks that the special role of the Spirit lies in interiorizing and universalising the mystery of Christ in the world and in history.¹⁴⁶ Wong sees that “the role of the Spirit, as responsive love, consists in introducing all human persons to participate in the total response of Jesus towards the Father.”¹⁴⁷ The Spirit is also the link between God and the creation. The Spirit establishes a ‘fellowship’ between God and ourselves and between us and our fellow-beings. “The Spirit can be the principle of communication and communion between God and us and between us and our fellow-men, because of what he is as Spirit-sovereign and subtle, unique in all men and uniting persons

¹⁴³ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 119.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 119-120.

¹⁴⁵ Taylor, *The Go-between God*, p. 17.

¹⁴⁶ W. Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ* (London: SCM, 1984), p. 211. Also Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 250.

¹⁴⁷ Wong, ‘The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus’, p. 74. Wong points out that Rahner and Kasper also highlight such epistemological role of the Spirit. It is only through the Spirit the self-communication of God through the revelation of Jesus Christ is received. Referring to Rahner, *The Trinity*, pp. 87-99; Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 267.

without encroaching on their freedom or their inner lives.”¹⁴⁸ So we see the Spirit as epistemological principle as well as an ontological concept.

3.4.5 Salvation and Deification

Spirit Christology recovers the Spirit’s role in salvation. Salvation from the perspective of the Spirit highlights personal relationship with God and union with God rather than so much in terms of guilt and reconciliation. Hook and Lampe speak of the person-forming character of the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit is the mutual love between the Father and the Son (Coffey) then it is possible to highlight the relational and affective dimensions of salvation. Roman Catholic Spirit Christologies seek to recover the proper mission of the Spirit and the theology of grace. Rahner explains grace as God’s self-communication and God’s presence with humans.¹⁴⁹ Following Rahner, many contemporary theologians affirm the role of the Spirit in salvation. For example, Haight says grace of God, as Spirit is “God’s self-communication to human beings, a gift of self which is at the same time a presence to and implicitly being active in the human spirit or freedom that is every person.”¹⁵⁰

Likewise, Eastern theology with the centrality it gives to the Spirit offers a different approach to soteriology. It emphasises union with God rather than redemption from

¹⁴⁸ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 33.

¹⁴⁹ Gerry Russo, ‘Rahner and Palamas: A Unity of Grace’, *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, 32 no. 2 (1998), 157-180, (p. 167). In Augustine’s view, grace is divine help or aid to human beings. Aquinas using Aristotelian categories says “God, by a gracious act of his will, helps the human soul in two ways...First, inasmuch as he moves the soul. Secondly, because a habitual gift of God is infused into the soul.” *Summa Theologiae*, Ia 2ae, qu. 110 cited in Georges Barrois, ‘Two Styles of Theology and Spirituality’, *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, 26 no. 2 (1982), 89-101, (p. 94). In short, for both Augustine and Aquinas, grace mediates right relationship between God and human beings.

¹⁵⁰ Haight, ‘The Case for Spirit Christology’, p. 273.

sins.¹⁵¹ “Union with God is the goal of the Christian life, even becoming ‘in-godded.’”¹⁵² Eastern theology focuses on restoring the image of God in humans. In Lossky’s view, *theosis* or deification involves both the Christological and the pneumatological basis. Christology and pneumatology are inseparable and the Spirit does not intervene to fill the gap between Christ and ourselves.¹⁵³ Moreover, “the idea of divine–human cooperation in salvation is not only accepted but is enthusiastically championed, although it is not understood as nullifying the role of grace.”¹⁵⁴ The whole of Christian life, concentrating on prayer, meditation, service and such spiritual exercises, is a movement towards deification.¹⁵⁵ Thus, the Eastern tradition could well integrate grace and human freedom. It speaks of the “synergy” of human and divine will. Grace is God’s presence within humans, which, in cooperation with human will, leads humans upward and accomplishes salvation.¹⁵⁶

This understanding of salvation has implications for ethics. The real basis for ethics is this sense of immortality and freedom from common moral factors and victory over death.

¹⁵¹ Meyendorff explains that in Greek thinking, “What is being transmitted from parents to children is not sin but mortality and slavery, creating a condition where sin is inevitable.” Meyendorff, ‘New Life in Christ: Salvation in Orthodox Theology’, p. 493. Further, Meyendorff thinks that this awareness of mortality and the good news of immortality is the quintessence of Paul’s message of resurrection. “‘If Christ has not been raised,’ writes St. Paul, ‘your faith is futile and you are still in your sins’ (I Cor 15:17), because a mortal human being cannot give up his struggle for survival and is therefore necessarily a sinner. Through immortality, however, he can be truly free.” Meyendorff, ‘New Life in Christ: Salvation in Orthodox Theology’, p. 498.

¹⁵² Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 69. The early church theologian Irenaeus spoke of human becoming of God and in the view of Ignatius of Antioch, human becoming God-bearers. Kenneth L. Bakken, ‘Holy Spirit and Theosis: Toward a Lutheran Theology of Healing’, *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, 38 no. 4 (1994), 409-423, (p. 417). Meyendorff says that this is the emphasis in Athanasius’s statement that “the Logos assumed humanity, that we might become God.” Meyendorff, ‘New Life in Christ: Salvation in Orthodox Theology’, p. 489, citing *On the Incarnation* 54 (PG 25, 192B). When the Greeks say the effect of grace is ‘deification’ unlike the Latin theologians who speak of restoration of right relationship between God and humans they speak of participation in God’s Trinitarian life. Barrois, ‘Two Styles of Theology and Spirituality’, pp. 94-95.

¹⁵³ Bakken, ‘Holy Spirit and Theosis: Toward a Lutheran Theology of Healing’, p. 417.

¹⁵⁴ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 69.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

Redemption is not merely remission of sins but also, primarily, this awareness of new freedom rooted in the life of God.¹⁵⁷

3.5 Conclusion

So, in conclusion, we say that Spirit Christology is tenable today. It is multidimensional and inclusive as well as specific. It is faithful to the Nicean affirmation that Jesus is consubstantial or one with God and the Chalcedonian affirmation that Jesus is one with us. Since Jesus is consubstantial and continuous with us it provides the ground for our spirituality and our encounter with the Spirit of God or God as Spirit. There is an interrelation between Christology, the theology of grace, ecclesiology and Christian spirituality. There are plural ways of understanding Jesus within the New Testament. Spirit Christology can give room to all the essential understanding of Jesus and incorporate within itself, and thus it can be truly inclusive.

There is no quarrel between *Logos* Christology and Spirit Christology. Spirit Christology does not oppose the classical Christology. But it clarifies and deepens the insights of classical Christology. As Congar says, it seeks to develop certain important aspects of Christology "which have not been sufficiently developed in the classical Christology based on the incarnate Word."¹⁵⁸ Hence, it can be stated that Spirit Christology can be comprehensive¹⁵⁹ and transcends the antinomies in Christology. It gives room to speak of both the ontological Sonship and the adoptive or existential Sonship. In other words,

¹⁵⁷ Meyendorff, 'New Life in Christ: Salvation in Orthodox Theology', p. 499.

¹⁵⁸ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, p. 165.

¹⁵⁹ Haight writes: "Spirit Christology seeks to present a consistent interpretation of Jesus in a way analogous to the *Logos* Christology that has ruled Christian consciousness since the second century. But unlike the *Logos* Christology which tended to place other Christologies in a shadow, a Spirit Christology can be understood as a basis for considering, interpreting, and appropriating other New Testament Christologies. Spirit Christology should be understood as functioning not in an exclusive but in an inclusive way. God as Spirit working in the life of Jesus can form the basis for the multiple interpretations of him by explaining why he was the Wisdom of God who spoke and even represented God's Word." Haight, 'The Case for Spirit Christology', pp. 271-272.

adoptionism and incarnationism can be seen together. Thus, we go beyond the Alexandrian Word–flesh Christology and Antiochean Word–man Christology. Christology from above and Christology from below, descending Christology and ascending Christology are seen together. It also enables us to solve the tension between modern Jesus of History and Christ of Faith dichotomy. Since both the Jesus of History and the Christ of Faith are closely associated by the Holy Spirit, the salvific power of Jesus, which is the Holy Spirit, is present in the *kerygma*. In Dunn's view, Jesus' own religious experience provides the basis for this. Jesus was conscious of God's Spirit working through him. Paul shows the mutuality between Christ and Spirit. Thus, the gap between the Historical Jesus and the Kerygmatic Christ is bridged.¹⁶⁰

The Spirit Christology also can be a Christology that gives a promise of unity among Christians of different traditions.¹⁶¹ It can resolve the tension between Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches over the issue of *filioque*. The Pentecostal dialogue with the Orthodox, the Roman Catholic and the Protestant traditions can bring fruitful and enriching reflections on various aspects of theology. The potentialities of Spirit Christology between Jews and Christians, Jews and Muslims as well as Christianity and Islam can also be explored further. In this study, as we have mentioned earlier, we are interested in

¹⁶⁰ Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, p. 151, citing Schoonenberg, 'Spirit Christology and Logos Christology', pp. 371-374.

¹⁶¹ Rosato writes: "Spirit Christology stood at the center of almost every major schism in the church. The rejection of the Ebionites and their Pneuma Christology was one factor which led to the split between the church and the synagogue. The controversy over the *filioque* resulted in the splintering of East from West. The central issues of the Reformation were also decidedly pneumatological, since a consensus concerning scripture and sacrament, church life and the church authority, could not be reached as long as the relationship of the Spirit of Christ to the organized spiritual and liturgical life of the community was not clear. In short, the unresolved problems concerning the Spirit's relationship to the Word, the community, and the individual have led to the most promising innovations and to the most painful divisions in the course of church history. Any reconciliation of the separated groups would seem to have to depend on the development of a Spirit theology which could narrow the gap between Jew and Christian, East and West, Protestant and Catholic. The ecumenical movement will have to retrace the once painful road of pneumatology, which now ironically seems to offer it genuine promise. Spirit Christology might, therefore, be able to serve the function of leading ecumenical discussion back to the central historical event of the Spirit filled Jesus, who was able to unite the Jew and the Greek into a new religious community." Philip J. Rosato, 'Spirit Christology: Ambiguity and Promise', *Theological Studies*, 38 (1977), 423-449, (pp. 426-427).

enriching Indian Christology and in so doing paving the way for a meeting ground between Hindus and Christians. In Part Two, we shall discuss two Indian theologians' interpretations of Christ and the Spirit and discover the trajectories of Indian Spirit Christology, thereby furthering our conversation on various elements of Spirit Christology that we have pointed out in this chapter. Indian Christian theology might add its own accent to this contemporary discussion of Spirit Christology. The following chapters take us into Indian reflections.

Part Two
Chapter Four

Indian Christian Theology

4.1 Introduction

Some Greeks came to Philip and said to him,

‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus’¹

To see Jesus is the wish of Indian Christians too. India is a country that celebrates diversity and multiplicity. It is a cradle of many religious traditions. Indians wish to see Jesus as an Oriental and they believe that Jesus can be understood from the “inner springs of an Eastern mind and heart.”² Indian Christian theology refers to Indian approaches to understanding Christ or the creative encounter between Christian faith and Indian patterns of thought. Although this effort was made as early as the sixteenth century, with the pioneering efforts of Robert De Nobili (1577–1656),³ the expression “Indian Christian theology” refers to a distinct theological tradition that flowered in the 19th and the early 20th centuries with the aim of explaining the Gospel message in interaction with various philosophies, ideologies and socio–political realities of India. M. M. Thomas observes that the “Indianness of Indian Christian theology” developed along three lines, firstly, in interaction with renascent Hinduism and nationalism; secondly, in interaction with secular ideologies and as a Christian theological response to socio–political realities; and thirdly, in interaction with popular religion and marginalised groups of Indian society.⁴

¹ Jn 12: 20, 21.

² V. P. Thomas, ‘Indian Christian Approaches to the Knowledge of Christ’, *Indian Journal of Theology*, 18 (1969), 88-99, (p. 88).

³ Robert De Nobili came to India as a Jesuit missionary in 1605. He adapted Hindu customs and practices, studied Sanskrit and Tamil and attempted to draw theological vocabularies from these languages. M. Stephan, *A Christian Theology in the Indian Context* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2001), p. 92.

⁴ M. M. Thomas, ‘Some Trends in Contemporary Indian Christian Theology’, *Religion and Society*, xxiv no. 4 (1977), 4-18, (p. 6).

In the nineteenth century, the leaders of the Hindu renaissance such as Ram Mohan Roy, Keshub Chander Sen, P. C. Mozoomdar, Sri Rāmakrishna, Swami Vivekānanda, Mahatma Gandhi and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan reformed Hinduism in the light of Christian teachings and understood Christ in the light of Hinduism.⁵ Hindu converts to Christianity, such as Krishna Mohan Banerjea, Lal Behari Day, Nehemiah Goreh, Brahmabandhav Upādhyāya, Pandipeddi Chenchiah, V. Chakkarai, Sadhu Sunder Singh, A. J. Appasamy and others, attempted to relate the Christian faith to the Indian context. Their encounter with Hinduism enabled them to develop theologies in terms of Hindu thought forms, theological terminology and religious experience.⁶

Although we cannot classify Indian Christian thinking into neat categories, one can observe three trends in Indian Christian theology: the spiritual–contemplative, the philosophical–theological and the socio–political. However, they are not mutually exclusive.⁷ As regards the philosophical resources for doing theology, Indian theologians in general have drawn resources from the monistic, the personalistic/theistic strand, and other strands of the Hindu philosophical system.

The *advaita* system of Śaṅkara, the eighth century philosopher, is a monistic system. According to this system, Brahman, the Ultimate Reality is *nirguna* (without characteristics), absolute, undifferentiated, one without a second. The world is *māyā* or illusion. The individual self, *ātman*, is identical with the Supreme Self, Brahman. The true knowledge or *vidyā* is the realisation of *ātman–brahman* identity. However there are new interpretations of *advaita*. For example, the Indian philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

⁵ A. M. Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology* (Bangalore, India: Dharmaram Publications, 1998), p. 8.

⁶ Timothy C. Tennent, *Building Christianity on Indian Foundations: The Legacy of Brahmabandhav Upadhyay* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), pp. 1-2.

⁷ Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology*, p. 22.

(1888–1975) does not deny the reality of the personal God, the world and the service of *jivan mukta* (one who has realised the unitive vision) to the world. Swami Vivekānanda (1862–1902) sees *advaita* as a movement: a person progresses from duality to modified non-duality to non-duality in an ascending order. Like Radhakrishnan, he thinks that the *jivan mukta* must serve the world and he sees *advaita* as the spiritual basis for social service.⁸

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh (1872–1950) rejected the monistic philosophy of *advaita*. Inspired by the Upaniṣadic teachings, he saw the whole of life as an evolutionary development.⁹ He saw Brahman involved in the evolutionary process of the world. He spoke of the 'descent' or involution of the bliss or *ānanda* of Brahman into matter, life and mind. Matter evolves and becomes mind, the ego-consciousness of persons and then supermind before it reaches the goal.¹⁰ The goal of this process is the spiritual community filled with inner bliss, *ānanda*, and sustained by *ānanda*, who live in harmony with all beings and finally merge into the *ānanda*.¹¹ Many Christian theologians, for example Brahmabhandav Upādhyāya, the French theologians Jules Monchanin, Swami Abhishiktānanda and Mark Sunder Rao, attempted to integrate *advaitic* tradition with Christian teaching.

The theistic strand of Hindu philosophy has its basis in the twelfth century Indian philosopher Rāmānuja's *viśiṣṭadvaita* (qualified non-dualism). Rāmānuja spoke of a personal God, the *Īśvara*, who is related to the world as the soul is related to the body. In personal relationship between God and world, the distinction between them is not lost.¹²

⁸ Thomas, 'Some Trends in Contemporary Indian Christian Theology', pp. 6-7.

⁹ Nalini Devdas, *Ānanda: The Concept of Bliss in the Upaniṣads* (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1974), p. 25.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹² R. H. S. Boyd, *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology* (New Delhi: ISPCK, 1989), p. 111.

This understanding of God and the *avatara* (incarnation of God)¹³ concept found in the Bhagavad Gītā provided resources to speak of a personal God behind all incarnations. Many Christian poets like H. A. Krishna Pillai, Nārāyan Vāman Tilak and the Indian theologian A. J. Appasamy followed this *bhakti* (deep devotion to a personal God) tradition and contributed to the emergence of Indian Christian *bhakti* theology.

Now returning to spiritual–contemplative approach in Indian Christian theology, Abhishiktānanda is one of the pioneers of this approach using *advaita* philosophy. Many others, like Jules Monchanin, who worked with Abhishiktānanda, Bede Griffiths, Vandana, Sara Grant, S. Jesudason, E. Forrester–Paton, Chenchiah, Murray Rogers, Amalorpavadass, and J. A. Cuttat, contributed towards the Christian Ashram Movement in India and to spiritual–contemplative dialogue with Hinduism.¹⁴ The pioneers of the spiritual–contemplative approach in general saw Christianity and Hinduism as mutually enriching. They “used equally Christian and Hindu resources for their spiritual contemplative activities” and “central to their abiding legacy was the experience and interpretation of *advaita* (non–duality) in order to reconcile it with Christian revelation.”¹⁵

Among these Indian theologians, we have chosen two, namely Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda, for our study on Spirit Christology. They do not have a Spirit Christology of their own. However, the centrality of the Spirit in their theologies will contribute a great deal to our subject. They share a common concern to reach Christ through the Spirit, although their approaches differ. They both take into consideration

¹³ “‘Avatar’ means that which descends or that which is coming down to earth.” Stephan, *A Christian Theology in the Indian Context*, p. 82. An *avatar* comes down from heaven, appears on earth in finite forms to destroy the evil and establish righteousness. In the Hindu view, an *avatar* is not an historical personality and it is not a once for all descent.

¹⁴ Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology*, p. 124.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

Indian psychology, experience, thought forms and theological terminology in their theologizing. Their aim is not to provide a new *theologoumena* or to meditate on Christian faith as mere concepts “after the fashion inherited from the Greeks” but to start “directly from the experience of the Self which is at the centre of every Indian theological and spiritual tradition.”¹⁶

Both Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda derive their inspiration from the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads represent a time when Brahmanic ritualism had reached saturation point and the age of the Spirit began.¹⁷ They cover several centuries (from the ninth to the sixth centuries BCE) of reflection on the divine, the mystery of being and the universe.¹⁸ There are about 112 Upaniṣads and some of the oldest ones are Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Chāndogya and Íśa Upaniṣads.¹⁹ Upa–ni–ṣad literally means “to be seated at the feet of the master and to receive his instruction.”²⁰ They are mainly conversations between a master and a disciple. This teaching is secret and hidden and “is the disclosure of certain ‘correspondences’ which are not perceptible at the mental level (the realm of *manas*), but which a particularly acute *buddhi* (intelligence or intuition) can discern.”²¹ The central message of the Upaniṣads is intuition of non–duality and the inner correspondence between *ātman* and *Brahman*.²² The Supreme Reality is understood to be “the deepest mystery of immanence in the human consciousness.”²³ The deepest centre of the human being, which is *ātman*, and the deepest centre of the universe, which is *Brahman*, are one and the same.²⁴ This shows the “impossibility of putting in *dvanda*, in a pair, God and the cosmos” because “the

¹⁶ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda: A Christian Approach to Advaitic Experience*, 1974, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), p. xv.

¹⁷ Abhishiktānanda, *The Further Shore*, 1975, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), p. 75.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹⁹ Juan Mascardo, *The Upanishads* (England: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 7.

²⁰ Abhishiktānanda, *The Further Shore*, p. 83.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

²² Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 51. See also p. 101, n. 8.

²³ Abhishiktānanda, *The Further Shore*, p. 77. Also Mascardo, *The Upanishads*, p. 12.

²⁴ Abhishiktānanda, *The Further Shore*, p. 104.

Absolute is not simply transcendent but transcendent and immanent all in one. The transcendent dimension forbids monistic identification; the immanent dimension, dualistic differentiation.”²⁵

Abhishiktānanda saw this non-dual intuition as a gift that can “reconcile different points of view, not by cancelling out one or other, but by transcending both in a fuller synthesis.”²⁶

He read the Upaniṣads in order to understand the Bible and the Bible in order to understand the Upaniṣads. Chenchiah, following Aurobindo’s interpretation of the Upaniṣads, contributed to the renewal of Church and nation by presenting Christ who lives today in His Spirit, and thus to the emergence of the “new Indian Christian consciousness.”²⁷ With this short introduction to Indian Christian theology we shall move on to present a brief biographical account of the two thinkers we have selected, and then we shall look at their interpretations of the relationship between the Spirit and Christ.

4.2 The Spirit and Christ in the Theology of Pandipeddi Chenchiah

4.2.1 Pandipeddi Chenchiah (1886–1959): A Brief Biographical Account

Pandipeddi Chenchiah was born in Nellore on the 8th December 1886. His father Adinaryanaiah was a prominent lawyer in Nellore. He and his family became Christians in 1901, when Chenchiah was a young man. He was a distinguished student at Madras Christian College, South India and a member of the college chapel, of which he remained a member all his life. D. A. Thangasamy appraises Chenchiah as having “a high degree of scholarship in various branches of knowledge – chiefly philosophy, history, law and

²⁵ Raymond Panikkar, ‘Toward an Ecumenical Theandric Spirituality’, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 5 no. 3 (1968), 507-534, (pp. 519-520).

²⁶ Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology*, p. 136.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

theology.”²⁸ He was well-versed in both Eastern and Western philosophies. After the completion of his master’s degree in law, he taught law at the Law College, Madras. Later on, he was appointed Judge of Puddukkottai District in Tamil Nadu, South India.²⁹

Chenchiah read widely on almost all subjects. He was an original thinker and responded to the signs of the times. Chenchiah developed his theology during the time when India looked forward to her independence and was eager to build herself as a nation. His writings reveal his concern for young Indians and the church in India as he commented on political movements and politicians from a Christian standpoint. He made efforts to bring a revolution among the Christians and started many new movements. Bangalore Young Liberals’ Club was one such, which was later known as Christo Samaj.³⁰ His Verandah Club was another effort to think about the church as well as discuss social and philosophical ideas.³¹ Chenchiah also made efforts to bring Hindus and Christians together. He speaks about one such effort thus:

I have started small groups consisting of Christians and Hindus for prayers for the sick. ... The names of those for whom prayers for health have to be offered are circulated among them by word of mouth and each day prayers are offered at a fixed hour, giving a sort of common bond to the members. It is a rule that a Hindu should pray preferably for a Christian and a Christian for a Hindu. ...³²

He was also one of the most prominent members of the ‘Rethinking Group.’³³ This was a small group of scholars in Madras (now known as Chennai) in Tamil Nadu, South India,

²⁸ D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), p. ix.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

³² Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, pp. xv-xvi, citing Chenchiah, “Co-operation of Religions,” *The Pilgrim*, March 1950.

³³ V. Chakkarai and P. Chenchiah led this group and this group was supported by prominent church leaders such as Bishop A. J. Appasamy, Pakenham Walsh, Rev. R. C. Das and Rev. H. V. Martin. V. C. Rajasekaran, *Reflections on Indian Christian Theology* (Madras: CLS, 1993), p. v. Rajasekaran has a chapter on ‘Rethinking Group’ in his book, which gives the origin, objectives and the significance of this group. See Rajasekaran, *Reflections on Indian Christian Theology*, pp. 114-122.

who were rethinking the basic tenets of Christian faith. They were also engaged in writing, either as a group or as individuals, but most of their writings are out of print. The bulk of their contribution to Christian thought, however, was made in the form of articles to religious periodicals like *The Guardian*, *The Pilgrim*³⁴ and *The Christian Patriot*.

Chenchiah was also part of a dialogue group at the Danish Mission Reading Room, which was "a prominent centre for dialogue between Christians and Hindus as well as among Christians themselves."³⁵ He participated in the third International Mission Conference at Tambaram in 1938 and contributed to the symposium that produced the book *Rethinking Christianity in India* that was published on the eve of the Tambaram conference as an Indian response to Hendrik Kraemer's book *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*.³⁶

Chenchiah was convinced that a recovery of Hindu spirituality that is inward in its orientation would help to make Christ relevant both to Indian Christians and to the Hindus. He believed that it might help Indian Christians rediscover some hidden aspects of Christ's life. "The Indian quest involves discoveries of new truths about Christ, additions to the sum of existing knowledge of Christ."³⁷ Śaṅkara's advaitism was not appealing to Chenchiah, since he considered that it discounted belief in *avatara* and denied the reality of the world. According to him, the Upaniṣads affirm plurality as real and the separation

³⁴ Chenchiah was the editor of *The Pilgrim* for many years. This paper was devoted to Christian study of other faiths. Chenchiah took up the editorship with an aim of engaging people of different faiths in dialogue and bringing co-operation in social action. D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah*, p. xv.

³⁵ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah*, p. viii.

³⁶ O. V. Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event and the Universality of Christianity in a World of Religious Plurality: With Special Reference to Hendrik Kraemer and Alfred George Hogg as Well as to William Ernst Hocking and Pandipeddi Chenchiah*, Studien Zur Interkulturellen Geschichte Des Christentums; 29 (Berne: Peter Lang, 1981), p. 354. He "contributed four articles and a 54-page long appendix to this volume. This Appendix is a review article on Kraemer's Tambaram book." Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event*, p. 354, n. 6.

³⁷ P. Chenchiah, 'Who Is Jesus?' *The Guardian* (1943), pp. 352, 353ff as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 100-122, (p. 108).

of the creation from God and each other as unreal.³⁸ Hence, he preferred the thought of Aurobindo, particularly the concept of evolution found in his writings.

Chenchiah was also influenced by the “creative evolution” of the French philosopher, Henri Bergson (1859–1941). For Bergson, reality is constantly becoming, and it is creative and moves upwards. This can be grasped only by intuition and not by intellect since intuition is in direct touch with reality.³⁹ The other important influence was Kanchypati Venkata Rao Venkatasami Rao (1868–1922) of Kumbakonam, South India. He was known by his disciples as Master C.V.V. He was a “Yoga Guru and an experimenter in the Yoga technique.”⁴⁰ Chenchiah reckoned that both the message of Aurobindo and the movement started by C.V.V. broke out of the traditional understanding of religion and tended towards something new in the direction of the mood of Christian life and destiny. Neither Aurobindo nor C.V.V. considered the world to be *māyā* but “looked to the coming of a force from *outside*”⁴¹ creation that would enter and transform human beings and the whole of creation.

Chenchiah saw the essentials common to both Aurobindo and C.V.V. as follows:

Creative process is the progressive revelation of God. God enters more and more into creation till at last in the final terms the spirit of God finds perfect expression in a body of glory.

It is futile to attempt to go back to God before creation. The *sankalpa* of God is that one should realise himself more and more in the creative process.

Man is a middle term in evolution. Evolution cannot stop with him. It must move on to its consummation.

The consummation is only possible by the entry of new powers of God hitherto withheld from evolution.

That body is the temple of the spirit. It is not to be annihilated by death. It is to be made immortal, deathless, potent and majestic by the entry of the author of creation

³⁸ Thomas, 'Some Trends in Contemporary Indian Christian Theology', p. 13.

³⁹ Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event*, p. 228.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 357, n. 2.

⁴¹ Boyd, *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology*, p. 146.

into the temple of Body. Thus does man become incarnation of God – the word made flesh.⁴²

Chenchiah saw this pattern of thinking as chiming with the Christian understanding of the Holy Spirit. One can observe in Chenchiah's writings a clear inclination towards understanding the work of the Holy Spirit as taking the whole of creation towards something new.

4.2.2 Chenchiah's Interpretation of the Spirit and Christ

Chenchiah adopted a great degree of independence to accept or to reject, to interpret or reinterpret the Christian faith. He wished to move away from what he perceived as petrified orthodoxy and hence he could not accept the creeds of the Church. He believed that all the externals about Jesus in the form of creeds, doctrines and concepts were bound to change and vary according to the context. The Christological task is to make Christian faith meaningful and contemporary in any given context.⁴³ Therefore, he attempted to reconstruct Christianity in the light of Hinduism.

Chenchiah had two audiences in his mind, namely, Indian Christians and Hindus. He wanted to make Christianity appear Indian to Indian Christians since Indian Christians are converts from other religions and they have "an intimate acquaintance to Hinduism."⁴⁴ He wrote that the two desires of Christians in India and Hindus who seek Christ are *pratyakṣa*

⁴² P. Chenchiah, 'Master C.V.V. of Kumbakonam', *The Guardian* (1943), pp. 484 f. & 497, as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 132-133, (pp. 132-133). See also P. Chenchiah, 'Religion in Contemporary India', in *Rethinking Christianity in India*, ed by G. V. Job et al (Madras: A. N. Sudarisanam, 1938), 201-214, (p. 212).

⁴³ O. V. Jathanna explains that for Chenchiah the function of theology lies in "discovering new aspects of Jesus through new experiences." Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event*, p. 382, citing Chenchiah, "Indian Christian Theological Task," *The Guardian* (2.1.1947), p. 7; (23.1.1947), pp. 44-45; (30.1.1947), pp. 57-58; (2.6.1947), pp. 67-68; (20.2.1947), pp. 87-88; (30.1.1947), pp. 110-112.

⁴⁴ Chenchiah, 'The Church and the Indian Christian', in *Rethinking Christianity in India*, ed. G. V. Job et al (Madras: A. N. Sudarisanam, 1938), 81-100, (p. 92).

(direct contact with Jesus Christ⁴⁵) and *punarjanma* (a longing for rebirth, to be born a son of God in the image of Jesus Christ).⁴⁶ Deep down in the hearts of Indians there is a yearning for *sayujiya*, or oneness and unity with Jesus in the sense of the experience of Paul who said, 'it is no longer I but Christ lives in me.'⁴⁷ Chenchiah's theology has to be studied bearing these concerns in mind.

In order to make Christianity relevant to both Indian Christians and Hindus he sought for a pneumatological foundation for Christology. For Chenchiah the statement about incarnation in the fourth Gospel, "the Word became flesh" could be interpreted as "the Spirit became flesh" since, according to him, the Word is another name for the Spirit.

The Word, which was with and was God, was inalienable from God, is but another name for the Spirit. The Word was the instrumentality of first creation. The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters and God said 'Let there be light', (Gen. 1.1). The spirit and the word are connected as vibration and sound. The Word was with God and was the Spirit of God.⁴⁸

Concerning Jesus' birth, Chenchiah pointed out that Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit. The biological birth of Jesus was important for him so he emphasised the virgin birth. Following evolutionary theory, he considered the virgin birth as a new way of procreation or a new mutation in the evolutionary process.

God brings into creation the Spirit and the Spirit by its operations brings forth the New Man Jesus. Jesus was on the mother's side—human, and on the father's side—

⁴⁵ "Indian culture distinguishes between two kinds of seeing, seeing outward and seeing inward. The senses open only outward and so they see only external things (*parān paśyati*); but there is seeing which is within, a seeing with the eyes turned within (*āvṛitta cakṣur*)." This is the direct and immediate religious experience or inner vision, which is called *pratyakṣa anubhava*. This goes beyond and much deeper than conceptual knowledge. Mariasusai Dhavamony, 'Indian Christian Theology', *Studia Missionalia*, 45 (1996), 95-118, (p. 99). In Chenchiah's view, the direct contact with Jesus or *pratyakṣa* experience of Christ is possible only by the guidance of the Holy Spirit since the Spirit leads us to Christ. Chenchiah, 'Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths', in *Rethinking Christianity in India*, 47-62, (p. 49, 56).

⁴⁶ Rajasekaran, *Reflections on Indian Christian Theology*, pp. xi-xii.

⁴⁷ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 4, citing Chenchiah, 'Indian Christian Theological Task, Review and Restatement (VI)', *The Guardian*, 1947. See also Chenchiah, 'Appendix', in *Rethinking Christianity in India*, 1-54, (p. 37).

⁴⁸ Chenchiah, 'Who Is Jesus?' p. 118. Cf. Chenchiah, 'Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, pp. 58, 60.

divine. His mother was Mary but his father was the Spirit. The birth was by the direct operation of the Spirit on the female of the species.⁴⁹

Furthermore, the Spirit also descended upon Jesus and took an abode in him. Hence, in Chenchiah's view, "What became flesh in Jesus was the Spirit."⁵⁰

For Chenchiah, Jesus was not the hyphenated God–Man as emphasised in traditional Christology.⁵¹ The incarnation is the fusion of the Son of God and the Son of Man. Jesus is neither God in separation from man nor man in separation from God. He is GodMan; He is the product of both God and man.⁵² According to him, "Incarnation signifies the emergence of a new man, partaking of divinity yet possessing humanity, detached and attached to both God and man."⁵³ Thus, Chenchiah could speak of the relationship between God and Jesus as the integration of divinity into humanity without recourse to the language of the creeds.

Further, in his view, incarnation means that God takes a permanent abode on earth.⁵⁴ He regarded the traditional doctrine, that speaks of incarnation as descending from heaven for a purpose and thereafter ascending back to heaven, as making the incarnation merely an

⁴⁹ Chenchiah, 'Who Is Jesus?' p. 119. This again is in Chenchiah's view differentiates Jesus' birth from the incarnations of Hinduism since all the incarnations of Hinduism were born of normal birth.

⁵⁰ Chenchiah, 'Who Is Jesus?' p. 118.

⁵¹ Chenchiah, 'Appendix', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, pp. 26-27.

⁵² Chenchiah, 'Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 53.

⁵³ P. Chenchiah, V. Chakkarai, A. N. Sudarisanam, *Asramas Past and Present* (Madras: Indian Christian Book Club, 1941) p. 136.

⁵⁴ This is the difference between Hindu *avatar* and Jesus Christ as the incarnation of God. He says, "Some *avathars* are redeemers. They come for a purpose and go. They do not stay with us. But there are some who bring heaven to earth to change earth into heaven permanently. They do not embody forces of our age. They bring powers of a glorious age of the future. They bring forth the children of God. In them, we see the actual beginning of a new order. Of such I know only Jesus of Nazareth." Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 14, citing Chenchiah, "Miller Endowment Lectures," p.46. Similarly V. Chakkarai sees incarnation of Jesus as a permanent *avatara* stressing the continuing Manhood of Jesus. For Chakkarai like Chenchiah *avatara* is dynamic rather than static. Rajasekaran, *Reflections on Indian Christian Theology*, p. 4.

“adventure and an episode.”⁵⁵ Chenchiah emphasised that, “The identity of Jesus is the identity of unchanging stability of God–man consciousness in the midst of changing circumstances.”⁵⁶ Jesus is permanently human and belongs to humanity. “God’s assumption of humanity, including the body, was a permanent one, and from now on, Jesus is the power of God and the first fruits of a new creation, a Divine Humanity, transcending mankind.”⁵⁷ This he also regarded as the incarnation of the Holy Spirit, which is the same as Word becoming flesh. In other words, Jesus is the incarnation of the Holy Spirit.

This raises the question as to how Chenchiah regarded the identity and distinction between the Holy Spirit and Jesus. He spoke about the descent of the Holy Spirit that integrated was with Jesus’ humanity from the conception. Here he seems to maintain a distinction between the Spirit and Jesus. Yet, when he says that the Holy Spirit is the universal Jesus, he seems to identify Jesus with the Holy Spirit. He thought this way of presenting the matter would take us beyond the historical Jesus and make Jesus and the Spirit become identical.

The Holy Spirit is the universal Jesus. Jesus was limited to time and space, and His teaching adapted to the age in which, and the people among whom, He lived. But He as the Holy Spirit transcends historic limitations and becomes *Paramapurusha* and *Antharyamin*, the Universal dweller in the human heart, whom men could invoke, to whatever religion they might belong. Jesus as the Holy Spirit meets India’s special needs and demands.⁵⁸

Chenchiah’s aim here was to bring out the uniqueness of Jesus for Christians and Hindus.

He observed,

⁵⁵ P. Chenchiah, ‘Review and Restatement of Marcus Ward’s Book on the Theological Task in India’, *The Guardian*, 1947, as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 58-81, (p. 81). See also Chenchiah, ‘Appendix’, *Rethinking Christianity in India*, pp. 17, 24.

⁵⁶ Chenchiah, ‘Review and Restatement of Marcus Ward’s Book on the Theological Task in India’, p. 81.

⁵⁷ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 7. See also Chenchiah, ‘Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths’, *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 53.

⁵⁸ P. Chenchiah, ‘Christianity and Hinduism’, *Pamphlet*, 1928 as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 195-220, (p. 217).

The Hindu honestly feels that there is nothing unique in Jesus. The beauty of Jesus, the majesty of his character, the winsomeness of his personality are not denied. But it is denied that Jesus has powers beyond the resources of Hindus. It is a fact that deserves the serious consideration of the Church that so far it has failed to impress the Hindu with the differentia of Christianity. The Hindu sees in Jesus nothing more than a great Rishi, a religious founder—perhaps as great as Buddha but no greater. This failure on the part of Christianity is due to the fact that the Church itself does not realise the uniqueness of Christ, in spite of its loud assertions to the contrary.⁵⁹

Therefore, he tried to show that the uniqueness of Jesus lies in his trans-historical dimension. The Spirit is the universalised Jesus and Jesus is present now as the Spirit. But does this emphasis on the Holy Spirit undermine the historical Jesus? Chenchiah realised the importance of giving due place for the historicity of Jesus Christ in his theological system. He wrote:

I think there is a great place for the Jesus of history in the religious experience of the Christian. All creation is the conjunction of the image and spirit, body and soul. In the creation of the kingdom of God also the Spirit must model itself after the pattern of Christ. Jesus as the prototype, as the very mould of new humanity, is indispensable for its creation. Even apart from these considerations, is it not the true Christian doctrine that it is the Spirit which leads us to Jesus?⁶⁰

Chenchiah's interpretation of Trinity shows how he distinguished the three members of the Trinity. God the Absolute is beyond human comprehension, Jesus stands in relation to human beings and the Holy Spirit is the universalised Jesus. In other words,

God the Father represents what has not passed into creation. God the Son represents what of Him has passed into creation. He is *Adi Purusha* of a new creation while the Holy Spirit is *Viswakarma* of a new world. Jesus is He that descends and having descended abides with us. He is *avathari* (he that descends) and *Tathagatha*, he that is to come to save the world process.⁶¹

Here is a hint that, in spite of the difficulty in identifying the Spirit with Jesus, Chenchiah not only speaks about pneumatological Christology (Christ is the descent of the Spirit) but

⁵⁹ Chenchiah, 'Christianity and Hinduism', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, pp. 207-208.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 219-220.

⁶¹ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 15, citing Chenchiah, "Who is Jesus?" *The Guardian*, (1943).

also about Christological pneumatology (the Holy Spirit is the universalised Jesus), though he does not elaborate on this further. Both these views touch upon another important theme in Chenchiah's theology, that is, New Creation.

In Chenchiah's thought, Jesus Christ, the divinehuman is the new emergence in history, the first fruit of the new creation. He is the new cosmic energy that abides with us.⁶² It is here that we can see the influence of Aurobindo on Chenchiah. Aurobindo taught that the Supreme Reality, the Spirit manifests itself in creation continuously. By interpreting the Spirit in this way, Aurobindo could overcome the gulf between unconscious matter and the fully conscious Spirit and the gulf between the Vedantic concept of transcendent Supreme Reality and the world. He argued that human beings have to go beyond their present form of consciousness to the supramental stage of consciousness. The kingdom of heaven on earth would consist of humans of a higher degree of perfection. Therefore, in Aurobindo's view, creation is lifted up and moved forward by the Supra-mind that comes from without, from above. Aurobindo expects a supra-mind, a new man, to descend in evolution and guide the whole evolution towards a creative expression who comes from above and who has full divine consciousness in flesh.⁶³

Chenchiah saw Aurobindo's Super-Mind, a new creation, in light of Christ's incarnation as the descent of the Spirit and the incarnation of Christ in the light of Aurobindo's Super-

⁶² Chenchiah, 'Appendix', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 24.

⁶³ Regarding Sri Aurobindo's teachings on this, Chenchiah explains: "... Sri Aurobindo tells us that Evolution has meaning to us by reason of the precedent involution. It is a descending and ascending movement. Thus regarded, matter, the last term in the involution, is not entirely inert and inscient but latently conscient. God descends through an entropy of self-concealment, the main grades being super-mind, higher mind, mind, life and lastly body or matter. In Evolution He recovers himself by reversing the order and mounting these steps of the ladder. The drive of Evolution is incessant and permanent and nature is in travail to bring about higher and higher stages of material transformation. At every higher mount of Evolution a power without enters and descends to the lowest step of the ladders and ascends transforming the nature of every one of the antecedent terms." P. Chenchiah, 'Aurobindo - His Message', *The Guardian* (1943), pp. 424ff as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 128-132, (pp. 128-129).

Mind. For Chenchiah, Jesus, the descent of the Spirit, the GodMan reality is a new order in creation. Jesus is a new mutation in the biological order. Jesus is the prototype of new creation. In other words, “incarnation constitutes an order of nature where God becomes the inner spirit of a species – not merely an indweller in a single man.”⁶⁴ Jesus takes the whole creation to a higher stage.⁶⁵ Jesus is the descent of the Spirit, who enters the creation as the fulfilment and culmination of the process of creation. Jesus “is the entry into life of something in God which till now remained outside creation and entered for the first time into the creative order in Jesus.”⁶⁶

Chenchiah believed that Paul’s emphasis on Jesus as ‘the first fruits of the spirit’ (Romans 1.23) ‘the first born among many brethren’ (8.29) is meaningful and relevant for Chenchiah in Indian context. Using Pauline language, he called Christ “the new creation”, “the second Adam.” In his view, Paul’s distinction between the first Adam and the second Adam is significant. The first man Adam was a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man was of the earth; the second man is the Lord from Heaven. “...The mark of new creation is birth in the Spirit...”⁶⁷ So Chenchiah understood that the clue to understanding Christ as the second Adam is the Spirit: Jesus is the first fruit of the Spirit.

For Chenchiah, Jesus brings new *śakti* or power or energy to the created order. “Jesus is the manifestation of a new creative effort of God, in which the cosmic energy of *śakti* is

⁶⁴ P. Chenchiah, ‘Christians and Yoga’, *The Guardian* (1944), pp. 136, 137ff. as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 279-283, (p. 282).

⁶⁵ Chenchiah, “Who is Jesus?” *The Guardian* (19.8.1943), p. 389, cited by Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event*, p. 381. See also Chenchiah, ‘Appendix’, *Rethinking Christianity in India*, pp. 27-28.

⁶⁶ Chenchiah, “Who is Jesus?” p. 389, cited by Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event*, p. 393.

⁶⁷ Chenchiah, ‘Who Is Jesus?’ *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 117.

the Holy Spirit, the new creation is Christ, and the new life order the Kingdom of God.”⁶⁸ Jesus is the Kingdom of God in person by becoming the first new man.⁶⁹ The kingdom of God is established by the power of the Spirit⁷⁰ and he understood the kingdom of God to be a new social order that happens when people are born again in the Spirit. Jesus’ earthly mission brought a new vitality to the poor, sick and the underprivileged. “... In him the supra-life has entered into the conditions of the world and begun to operate on man and nature.”⁷¹

Hence, Christ’s salvific significance lies in bringing new creation and not merely in redeeming the souls of human beings or the restoration of human beings to their original condition. Since his emphasis is on new creation, Chenchiah tends to link incarnation with resurrection rather than with the cross. In the traditional view of salvation, the cross is at the centre. Here, “God is a judge; law, a command; man a criminal; Jesus the lamb of God sacrificed as a propitiation. ...”⁷² The doctrine of propitiation is based on the doctrine of fall and the atoning sacrifice of Christ’s death. This is a mythical representation of spiritual realities. For Chenchiah, it is the fact of Christ has soteriological significance rather than his act on the cross: Christ saves us “by virtue of his existence and being and not by an act of His. Christ does not save us by suffering on the cross. Just as an animal is

⁶⁸ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 16, citing Chenchiah, *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p.56,

⁶⁹ Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event*, p. 384, citing Chenchiah, “Kingdom of God in India,” *The Guardian* (1939), p. 261.

⁷⁰ Chenchiah, 'Appendix', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, (pp. 24-25, 28). See also Chenchiah, 'Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, pp. 54-55.

⁷¹ P. Chenchiah, 'The Destiny of Man and the Interpretation of History', *Miller Endowment Lecture*, pp. 45-49, as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 123-128, (p. 125).

⁷² Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 12, citing Chenchiah, “Dr Brunner and the Indian Christian Reaction,” *The Guardian*, 1950, August, 17.

saved in man by the animal nature being sublimated by the entry of mind and reason, men are saved by attaining Christhood.”⁷³

He believed that Christianity, by stressing, “law, disobedience, sin, cross, propitiation, and judgement”, misses the beautiful message of the Gospel that is newness of life.⁷⁴ Hence, for Chenchiah resurrection is “a necessity of the new order.”⁷⁵ The Holy Spirit reproduces Jesus in us.⁷⁶ The Holy Spirit “presides over the new creation and lives in the sons of God as their atman.”⁷⁷ Salvation or new life is the sense or consciousness of “harmonious blend with the divine”⁷⁸ and “the incarnation is as much what man is to become as what God has become.”⁷⁹ Christ takes history to a higher plane; he brings new existence, a new mode of life. Christ is the head of a new order of creation. New creation is “a further stage in the planetary life of mankind brought about by the release of fresh energy through a new and tremendous creative act of God.”⁸⁰ Hence, the essential message of Christianity is the new creation.⁸¹

In Chenchiah’s theology, Jesus “carries human destiny to new heights.”⁸² It is a higher life that is not bound by Karma, death and the cycles of birth and rebirth.⁸³ He thought that

⁷³ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 13, citing Chenchiah, “Dr Brunner and the Indian Christian Reaction,” *The Guardian*, 1950, August 17, 24. See also Chenchiah, ‘Appendix’, *Rethinking Christianity in India*, pp. 21-24.

⁷⁴ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 13, citing Chenchiah, “Review of Eastborn’s *The Religion of Tagore in the light of Gospel*,” *The Guardian*, 1950, March 2.

⁷⁵ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 9, citing Chenchiah, *Miller Endowment Lecture*.

⁷⁶ Chenchiah, “Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths,” *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 59.

⁷⁷ Chenchiah, ‘Christians and Yoga’, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, (p. 282).

⁷⁸ Chenchiah, ‘Appendix’, *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 27.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁸⁰ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 17.

⁸¹ Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event*, p. 366, citing Chenchiah, “Evangelism,” *The Guardian* (31.10.1940), p. 665.

⁸² Chenchiah, ‘The Destiny of Man and the Interpretation of History’, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 125.

⁸³ Chenchiah, ‘Appendix’, *Rethinking Christianity in India*, pp. 24, 53-54.

presenting Christianity as a higher realm of life would make the Gospel relevant to both Christians and Hindus. Hinduism longs to escape from *samsara* (the cycle of births and deaths) and from the limitations of human existence, and Christianity's contribution is precisely here in showing that Christ lifts the human existence to a higher plane by bringing a new energy into creation from beyond. Jesus is the new energy, the eternal power that has entered into creation. Therefore, it is possible to have a new life now through Christ. This, Chenchiah believed, is the unique message of Christianity to Hinduism. It is in bringing new life that Christ becomes unique.⁸⁴ This is where Christianity is different and distinctive from other faiths. It is entirely new. So other religions including Judaism cannot build bridges to Christ, rather Christ builds bridges to other religions.⁸⁵ But, at the same time, Chenchiah believed that the Holy Spirit is at work in all religions to bring about understanding of the new creation that Christ brought into this world.

However, Chenchiah did not accept Hinduism uncritically. In fact, he was critical of Hinduism at many points. He also identified significant differences between Hinduism and Christianity.⁸⁶ But, in spite of its imperfections, he believed that Hindu philosophy would help bring out some new features of the person and work of Jesus Christ. He wrote, "... Hinduism brings out hitherto unknown features of the portrait (of Jesus) and these may prove exactly the 'Gospel' for our time. The same thing happens to Hinduism when

⁸⁴ Chenchiah, 'Christianity and Hinduism', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 216.

⁸⁵ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 34, citing Chenchiah, 'Our Theological Task – VIII', *The Guardian*, 1947.

⁸⁶ For example, he says, "To the Semitic ... Truth is ethical, dividing the right from the wrong, good from the bad. To the Hindu, truth is the support uniting the divisions on the surface." Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 38, citing Chenchiah, "Christianity and Hinduism," *Pamphlet*, 1928.

developed in a Christian environment.”⁸⁷ At this point, it is worth noticing his critique of Hindu *yoga* and his interpretation of the *yoga* of the Spirit to receive Jesus Christ.

Yoga means union (*yuj* literally means ‘to join’), the opposite of separation (*viyoga*) that causes grief and suffering as in the case of parted lovers. In Chenchiah’s view, any *yoga* system that teaches the loss of individual identity should be abhorred. Therefore, he did not accept indiscriminately the features of *yoga* as developed in Hinduism. Indeed, he criticised the *yoga* of Hinduism as “primarily directed towards the destruction of creation or merging it in the Absolute.”⁸⁸ Chenchiah explained that *yoga* in a broad sense is a “psycho–physical discipline and technique for attaining the spiritual end of union or communion with God”⁸⁹ that results in *ānanda* and *kaivalya*. Thus, *yoga* is a technique, a means to an end that can be used in Christianity. The religion of *yoga* is not something given and unchangeable rather it is a religion of movement, giving room for change and alteration and thus moving humans forward. *Yoga* recognises human beings’ power within to work out their salvation.

Chenchiah stated that there is a place for grace, yet grace does not work without the participation of human beings. For a Hindu, the One can be reached by diverse means depending on his or her attributes of personality: “The *yoga* of *jnana* for the path of intellect, *yoga* of action for the path of will, *yoga* of *bhakti* for the path of emotion.”⁹⁰ As we stated above, Chenchiah was against any teaching that emphasises the absorption of

⁸⁷ Chenchiah, ‘Appendix,’ *Rethinking Christianity in India*, (p.20).

⁸⁸ P. Chenchiah, ‘Critique of Traditional Yoga’, *The Guardian*, 1944, pp. 136-137ff. as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 276-279, (p. 276).

⁸⁹ P. Chenchiah, ‘Yoga Defined’, *The Guardian*, 1944, pp. 136-137ff. as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 262-263, (p. 263).

⁹⁰ P. Chenchiah, ‘Yoga and Religious Ends’, *The Guardian*, 1944, pp. 136-137ff. as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 263-264, (p. 263).

human self into divine self. He writes, "Life should flow on, broadening as it flows forwards. Necessarily, the new movements could hardly accept the old yoga. The yoga of destruction or yoga that merges *Jivatma* in *Paramatma* cannot be a fitting instrument of religion which seeks to establish immortal life."⁹¹

Religion is the affirmation of life and immortality. The yoga of annihilation does not lead to the perfection of creation. Since, "We do not desire to move backwards into the origin. We march onwards to an end which is a consummation and perfection."⁹² Chenchiah believed this was the point of view taken by Sri Aurobindo and Master C.V.V. as well as Christo Samaj.⁹³ But the difference between these two schools of thought and Chenchiah is that, for Chenchiah, the perfection has come in Jesus Christ for "evolution was perfected in Jesus."⁹⁴ Although Hindu *yoga* systems develop what is in man, Chenchiah insisted that they do not guide to the source of new life.⁹⁵ Both Aurobindo and C.V.V. realised that humanity needs a new power from without but could not point to Christ.⁹⁶ But Chenchiah believed that it is Christ who brings "new energy, a new power which is not in the world, or in man, to bear upon the re-making of the new man."⁹⁷ In his view, God or Holy Spirit takes the initiative in bringing the new man in the ordinary man. We receive the Spirit and it is the *yoga* of reception. Christianity is about "creating new men and this new power is

⁹¹ Chenchiah, 'Critique of Traditional Yoga', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 277.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 283.

⁹³ Chenchiah, 'Critique of Traditional Yoga', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 276.

⁹⁴ P. Chenchiah, 'Amrita Yoga or Christian Yoga', *The Guardian*, 1944, pp. 136-137ff as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 283-284, (p. 283).

⁹⁵ Chenchiah, 'Critique of Traditional Yoga', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 278. See also Chenchiah, 'Appendix', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 43.

⁹⁶ Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event*, p. 367.

⁹⁷ P. Chenchiah, 'Atrophy of the Conception of the Kingdom of God', *The Guardian*, 1939, pp. 260-262, as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 289-294, (pp. 292-293).

the Holy Spirit.”⁹⁸ Hence, the *yoga* of Holy Spirit which he calls “*Parisuddha atma yoga*” (*yoga* of the Holy Spirit) or “*Amrita yoga*”⁹⁹ (*yoga* of everlasting life) is about transformation of life into a new creation. This is not by “concentration as suitable to developing latent powers” as the *yoga* of Hinduism stresses but it is by “surrender as suitable for the reception of new powers.”¹⁰⁰

However, Chenchiah also thought that Hindu *bhakti yoga* could be of service to Christian *bhakti* by enriching it with the depth of emotion in devotion to God and worship.¹⁰¹ In his view, surrender means *ekagratha* (one-pointedness) where “all the energies of mind, will, passion, and longing are converged to one focus where it bursts into a constant flame ...”¹⁰² To enter into New Creation in Christ, a person needs to be totally committed and respond to the inner guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is “listening in to God” in silence.¹⁰³ Like Aurobindo, Chenchiah emphasised that “non-attachment is the first step in this discipline, which leads him into the transformation of life. It is only through this narrow door that the disciple can enter into the full life in Christ.”¹⁰⁴ Entry is by deep devotion to God and longing to become sons of God by the power of the Holy Spirit with all our heart, mind and soul.

⁹⁸ Chenchiah, 'Atrophy of the Conception of the Kingdom of God', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 293.

⁹⁹ P. Chenchiah, 'Yoga of Holy Spirit', *The Guardian*, 1944, pp. 136-137ff as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 284-285, (p. 284).

¹⁰⁰ Chenchiah, "Critique of Traditional Yoga," *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 278.

¹⁰¹ P. Chenchiah, 'Christians and Yoga', *The Guardian*, 1944, pp. 136, 137ff (series), as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 279-283, (p. 281).

¹⁰² Chenchiah, 'Yoga of Holy Spirit', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 285.

¹⁰³ P. Chenchiah, 'Prayer', *The Guardian*, 1944, pp. 136-137ff as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 285-288, (p. 285).

¹⁰⁴ Devdas, *Ananda*, p. 37.

This self-surrender is not the abolition of the human ego; the ego is surrendered to the Spirit without extinguishing itself. Chenchiah regarded the doctrine of *Kshetragna* of the Geeta as expounding this truth. The Lord is the “*Saradhi*”, the pilot of our lives. The Lord is “*Kshetragna*” who “works and acts through the ego which becomes purified and sanctified by becoming the mouthpiece of the spirit.” For him, this truth is explained by Paul in his confession, ‘I live, yet not I but Christ lives in me’ (Gal 2:20). This practice of inner surrender is essential to his *Amrita Yoga*.¹⁰⁵

The good news of Christianity is the birth of Jesus and the problem of the Christian is how to reproduce him... The unique fact about Jesus is that he was begotten of God. The Christian must be begotten of the Holy Spirit. Like reproduction, Christianity is a birth process.¹⁰⁶

So, in conclusion, we may say that Chenchiah offers some significant insights into our understanding of the relationship between the Spirit and Christ. His interpretation of Christ as the descent of the Spirit, Christ’s incarnation as GodMan unity, Christ as the New Creation, his emphasis on newness of life rather than on sin and reconciliation and on the *yoga* of the Spirit show that he considers Christianity as a religion of interiority, a religion of total *sadhana* that leads to the realization of communion with God.

Unlike *Logos* Christology, which makes talk about the human nature of Christ an abstraction, Chenchiah’s Christology gives importance to the humanity of Christ, although his Christology is a high Christology. He highlights the “metaphysical and cosmic importance”¹⁰⁷ of Christ without obscuring Christ’s humanity. Christ is fully human yet new.

¹⁰⁵ Chenchiah, 'Prayer', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, (p. 287). For details on different types of *yoga* and Chenchiah’s views on *yoga* and his interpretation of *yoga* of the Spirit, see also Rajasekaran, *Reflections on Indian Christian Theology*, pp. 160-170.

¹⁰⁶ Chenchiah, 'Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 59.

¹⁰⁷ Jathanna, *The Decisiveness of the Christ-Event*, p. 387.

Jesus the GodMan, the fusion of Son of God and Son of Man is a permanent integration. The aspiration of Hinduism is an accomplished reality in Jesus.¹⁰⁸ He takes a position different from the *avatar* doctrine, which speaks of gods coming down to discharge their temporary mission on earth. Chenchiah's Christ, the GodMan, stays with humans permanently, unlike the *avatars*.

He also takes a position different from Śaṅkara's absolutism, which does not speak of God's involvement in the creation. Chenchiah's Christ is involved in the creative process. By taking into consideration the psychology of Hindus and the need of Indian Christians, he rightly points out that Christ has to be contemporary to both Christians and Hindus. Therefore, more than the historical Jesus, the cosmic significance of Jesus is paramount importance in this context. This explains why Chenchiah seeks to propose a pneumatological Christ for India. He wrote, "It is the genetic or creative aspects of Jesus; it is the Holy Spirit as creative energy that takes the Indian into the new 'given' in Jesus."¹⁰⁹ His concern was to show that precisely here Christ is unique for both Christians and Hindus. This recovery of new creation in Indian Christian theology is commendable.

However, Chenchiah's interpretation is not accepted without criticism. Since Chenchiah took insights from evolutionary philosophy and Aurobindo's descent of the Super-Mind, he saw new creation as the culmination of the evolutionary process, that is, he saw creation as evolution. Like Teilhard de Chardin, Chenchiah's interpretation of new creation is not anatomical evolution but, in the noosphere, it is about new consciousness. Christ comes as a new order or phase of creation that leads all creation towards something new in the evolutionary plane.

¹⁰⁸ Chenchiah, 'Appendix', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, pp. 26-27.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Moreover, in Chenchiah's theology, Jesus is the *adi purusha* (first man) of the new creation, who permanently enters the created order. Jesus' birth is biologically different from other humans.¹¹⁰ Some Indian Christian theologians have raised questions about Chenchiah's interpretation of new creation, particularly Jesus' virgin birth, as the culmination of the evolutionary process because it undermines his uniqueness.¹¹¹

Nonetheless, despite the biological slant, he draws our attention to the spiritual nature of the new creation. D. A. Thangasamy sees this as the strength of Chenchiah's theology.¹¹²

As a result, in the quest for new creation, Chenchiah saw common ground between Christianity and Hinduism. In his view, both Christianity and Hinduism influence each other and move towards a common direction. Both the religions reach out to a new power that takes human existence beyond itself. Both long for a new *śakti*, the goal of both religions. However, Chenchiah does not abandon the historical Jesus. The historical Jesus is the prototype of all creation. Jesus is decisive and central and he is the unique and distinctive figure to enable us to realise our own destiny. We share in the *anubhava* of Jesus himself. Pape comments, "The main unity the New Testament sees realised between Christ and God is the very unity God has intended all along as man's destiny – a point Chenchiah grasped with burning clarity."¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Chenchiah could easily accept the miracle accounts in the Gospels. According to him, Jesus had a new body, spiritual body that could have control over nature, for Jesus could even still the storm.

¹¹¹ A. J. Appasamy's comments on this: "If the doctrine of Chenchiah is true that ...with the birth of Jesus a new type of man appeared of whom He was the supreme example, it follows that during all the twenty centuries that have elapsed there must have been several sons of God." Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 18, citing "A. J. Appasamy's Comments on 'Who is Jesus,'" *The Guardian*, 1943, September 30.

¹¹² The spiritual character of new creation differentiates him from Chardin's methodological starting point. "Though Chenchiah argues for New Creation on the basis of biblical texts and Christian faith it is possible to trace the particular biological slant of his exposition of the doctrine to the influence of Bergson. However, he saw the New Creation as a supernatural act of God and not as the result of the pressure of the biological urge characteristic of man. This is the chief difference in approach between him and Piere Teilhard de Chardin whose outline of neogenesis runs otherwise closely parallel to Chenchiah's account of the new creation." Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, pp. 20-21.

¹¹³ W. Roy Pape, 'India and the Latin Captivity of the Church, Review Article', *Religion and Society*, xxiv no. 1 (1977), 66-83, (p. 77).

Further, Chenchiah offers us a broad view of the work of the Holy Spirit. His idea of new creation points to a gradual ascent or upward thrust of the whole creation towards Christ and the proximity of God in creation directing all creation towards Christ. He sees the incarnation as the goal of history and thus integrates the whole creation into the reality of Christ. Christ is the climax of the creative activity of the Spirit in the evolutionary process and the Spirit brings all things towards a goal, that is, into the reality of Christ. The Spirit inaugurates the new age. The role of the Holy Spirit is broadened from traditional Protestant understanding to include the renewal and transformation of the whole created order. This is a spiritual movement for Chenchiah. He does not seem to give equal emphasis to the role of the Spirit in healing, liberating and bringing hope to the oppressed and the marginalised as liberation theologians do. For liberation theologians, the most fundamental challenge of our theological task today is to bring the relevance of the gospel to the issues relating to justice, poverty and oppression in an ever-changing society. Nevertheless, Chenchiah's interpretation of the Kingdom of God makes it clear that he also sees the new creation as a new social order.

Also, concerning the identity and distinction between the Spirit and Christ, Chenchiah is not very clear. Jesus is the descent of the Spirit and the Spirit models itself after the pattern of Christ. This brings together pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology. However, his interpretation of the Spirit as the universalised Jesus fails to show the distinction between the two. He aspires to see Christ as the living Christ and so identifies Jesus with the Spirit. The living Christ is Holy Spirit (*mahāśakti*). Hence, his conception of the Spirit needs some clarification.

Chenchiah criticised the Church, but did not intend to avoid the Church altogether, for he himself was a member of a church until the end of his life. What he wanted to stress was the renewal, creativity and rethinking of the concept of the church in the Indian context. He thought that new understandings about being a church might emerge within our traditions if we were willing to be creative. For him, the Church had to point to Jesus rather than point to herself. Hence, the community that reproduces Christ takes the place of the Church in his thinking. He wrote:

There is one type of Christianity which is biological, pivoted on new birth, acquisition of a new body and faculties for the creative operations of the Holy Spirit – a Christianity that reproduces Christ in the Christian, and another type of Christianity where Life forces are translated into a lower notation of Church, ideology, organization, state power.¹¹⁴

The Church has to be the “cradle of new life,”¹¹⁵ so he made an appeal for an open church. He said, “...Let us get out of the incense-laden Churches to the free air of plains. Let us go out of sects into vast spaces of community, let us leave candle-lit altars and pass into the sun-lit world that we may see without distraction plain facts in true proportion. ...”¹¹⁶

Thus, Chenchiah's theology was in many ways innovative. His aim was to rediscover the hidden aspects of Christ's life and make it relevant to both Indian Christians and Hindus. As Devdas says, “though he speaks as a Christian, it is clear that he has learned well from the sages of the Upaniṣads.”¹¹⁷ Like a prophet, he sees God working within the most flexible regions of each religion that could yield themselves to the creative act of God. He stated,

¹¹⁴ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 25, citing Chenchiah, “Evangelism in Free India,” *The Guardian*, 1956, (series).

¹¹⁵ Chenchiah, ‘Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths’, *Rethinking Christianity*, p. 62.

¹¹⁶ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 28, citing Chenchiah, “Problems of Indian Christian Community,” *The Guardian*, 1942, pp. 40ff.

¹¹⁷ Devdas, *Ananda*, pp. 37-38.

We would find that God is working out a common pattern out of the pliable material in each religion. In the region of religious thought not yet worked out in rigid forms and formularies, whether it be in Christianity or Hinduism, in the realm where the soul is not firmly established in tradition, the spirit of God moves and effects his purpose, for here alone is life that can yet respond to the breath of the spirit and issue in creative action. Here Hinduism is imprinting on Christianity forms of thought which are its distinctive contribution to spiritual vision, and here Christianity is drawing out of Hinduism the forms of the new creation, of which Jesus is the prototype.¹¹⁸

Nevertheless, such an endeavour was not without risk. Both Hindus as well as Christians misunderstood Chenchiah. Chenchiah recalled this collision in a brief conversation with his friend T.R. Venkatarama Sastri and we conclude with his words:

He greeted me with the words, 'I say you are in the position of a drum. You are thumped on both sides. Hindus go at you for your Christianity and Christians, I dare say, for your sympathy with Hinduism'. 'Mr Sastiar', I replied, 'I don't mind how hard they thump if only they drum some music out of me'¹¹⁹

4.3 The Spirit and Christ in Swami Abhishiktānanda's Theology

4.3.1 Swami Abhishiktānanda (1910–1973): A Brief Biographical Account

Swami Abhishiktānanda,¹²⁰ whose French name was Dom Henri Le Saux, was born in France in 1910 and entered a Benedictine monastery in 1929. He came to India in 1948 with a desire to experience Christian faith in the patterns of Hindu spirituality. He believed that Hinduism might help him to come to a deeper understanding of Christ.

Abhishiktānanda responded to the call of total dispossession and wore the garb of a *sannyāsi*, a saffron loin-cloth, which is the Indian sign of renunciation.¹²¹ In 1950, along with Jules Monchanin, another Benedictine monk who had been in India since 1939, he

¹¹⁸ Chenchiah, 'Aurobindo – His Message', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 221.

¹¹⁹ Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. x, citing Chenchiah, *The Pilgrim*, July 1951, Editorials.

¹²⁰ Abhishiktānanda is a short form of his name Abhishikteshvarānanda meaning 'Bliss of the Anointed One, the Lord.' Or 'Joy of the Anointed.' James Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda: His Life Told through His Letters*, 1989, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), p. viii.

¹²¹ Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala: A Christian Hermit on Shiva's Holy Mountain*, 1979, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), p. 27.

founded an *āshram* in a place called Kulittalai in Trichirappalli district in South India in order to lead a contemplative life in accordance with the tradition of Christian monasticism as well as in accord with Hindu spirituality. This *āshram*, which became their residence, was called *Saccidānanda Āshram* (the hermitage of the Most Holy Trinity) and was described as “an attempt to integrate into Christianity the monastic tradition of India.”¹²²

After Monchanin’s death in 1957, Abhishiktānanda built a small hermitage besides the Holy Ganges at Uttarkhasi¹²³ in the Himalayas and this became his home from 1968¹²⁴ until his death on 7th December 1973.¹²⁵

As mentioned above, Abhishiktānanda believed that the gift of Hinduism to the world religions is that of interiority and a unique inward orientation of the spirit. The Hindu *advaitin* sage Ramanamaharshi¹²⁶ of Arunāchala in Tiruvannamalai in South India, whom he met in 1949, was one of the most profound influences on Abhishiktānanda’s life.¹²⁷

Ramanamaharshi was born in Madurai district in South India. Even as a young boy, he felt the thirst to be one with God. He left home when he was seventeen years old and decided to live at the foot of Mount Arunāchala in South India, where he stayed for more than fifty years until his death on the 14th of April 1950.¹²⁸ There he had a deep inward experience of *Brahman*.¹²⁹ The central teaching of this sage concerned the mystery of the heart. He taught:

¹²² Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. viii. About the *āshram* and the life in *āshram* see Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, pp. 37-109.

¹²³ For a detailed account see Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, pp. 110-204.

¹²⁴ English Benedictine monk Bede Griffiths (1906-1993) took over the responsibility of the *āshram* in 1968.

¹²⁵ For a detailed biography of Abhishiktānanda see Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, pp. 1-36.

¹²⁶ Odette Baumer-Despeigne in her introduction to *The Secret of Arunāchala: A Christian Hermit on Shiva’s Holy Mountain* says that Sri Ramanamaharshi, one of India’s most authentic sages influenced Abhishiktānanda very much. See also Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. viii.

¹²⁷ Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. 29.

¹²⁸ Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. vii.

¹²⁹ Ganapati Sāstri, one of his disciples in Sri Ramanagītā, states his experience in the following words:
In the midst of the cave of the heart,
in the form of the I, in the form of the Self,
unique and solitary,

Find the heart deep within oneself, beyond mind and thought, make that one's permanent dwelling, cut all the bonds which keep this heart at this level of sense and outward consciousness, all the fleeting identifications of what one *is* with what one has or what one does.¹³⁰

Sri Gnānānanda Giri of Tirukoyilur in South India, whom Abhishiktānanda met in 1955, was also a great influence on him.¹³¹ It was through Sri Ramanamaharishi and Sri Gnānānanda that Abhishiktānanda learned Hindu spirituality¹³² and he himself experienced the mystery of Hindu interiority. He had spent several months between the years 1949 and 1956 living in caves¹³³ in the mountain of Arunāchala in solitude and silence, experiencing in his own body and soul the struggles and deep content of *mauna* (silence). “Silently you teach me silence, Arunachala, you who never emerge from your silence”¹³⁴ was his plea. The silence of the mountains taught him the unique mystery of God. Odette Bäumer—

Brahman's glory shines
directly from Himself on Himself.
Penetrate deep within,
your thought piercing to its source,
your mind immersed in itself,
with breath and sense held close in the depths,
your whole self fixed in yourself,
and there, simply BE!

Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. 21.

¹³⁰ Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. 14.

¹³¹ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. vii. See also Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, pp. 86-91. For the full account of his experience with Sri Gnānānanda, see, Abhishiktānanda, *Guru and Disciple: An Encounter with Srī Gnānānanda a Contemporary Spiritual Master* (London: SPCK, 1970). Gnānānanda means “Wisdom and Joy” or “The Bliss of Knowledge.” Like Sri Ramana, Gnānānanda taught his disciples to seek the divine reality that is beyond words and signs in the depth of the heart. Although these words were already familiar to Abhishiktānanda through the teachings of Sri Ramana, when it was repeated by Gnānānanda, it was once again a “call to the Within.” Abhishiktānanda, *Guru and Disciple*, p. 4, 11.

¹³² Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. viii.

¹³³ The significance of living in caves can be understood in the light of early Vedic religion. “The early Vedic religion did not make use of temples. The place where the sacrificial ritual (*yajña*) was performed became (temporarily) sacred. The time during which the *yajña* was performed became a sacred time, opening the doors to immortality. The *yajña* was likened to a womb with the patron of the sacrifice (*yajamana*) as the embryo. The sacrifice gave birth to a new person and also the bridgehead to the transcendent.” This explains why sages live in caves. Cave is likened to womb. It gives birth to a new person. That is why the sanctuary of a temple is like a cave. It is called “*garbha-graha* – womb house”. “In the confines of the sanctuary the worshipper is transformed and reborn.” Julius Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 278.

¹³⁴ Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. 29.

Despeigne cites Abhishiktānanda's own feeling: "I regard this stay at Tiruvannamalai as being at once a real retreat and an initiation into Indian monastic life."¹³⁵

It was in Arunāchala that he had a non-dual experience, a "unique intuition that is beyond all conceptualization,"¹³⁶ which he described as a state of "jyoti, shanti, ananda."¹³⁷ On the 29th of March 1952 he wrote in his diary about his experience on his first day: it was a state of "profound joy and peace" and "even hunger scarcely made itself [felt]." He further wrote: "Now I am ready, if the Lord wills, to remain for ever quite simply...a Hindu-Christian monk... Solitude, silence, poverty."¹³⁸ This experience enabled him to understand the Christian faith more intensely and enriched a deep union with Christ. Christ "remained to the end his *Sadguru*, the divine spiritual Master."¹³⁹

Later Abhishiktānanda went on pilgrimage to the several sources of the River Ganges, the Holy Mother Ganga, to Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath, Hardwar and Rishikesh. This again was a spiritual experience for him and he found all these pilgrimages guided him to the *antar-yatrā* (inner journey) of Indian tradition. His meeting with the Hindu sages and with village friends, their long conversations about Upanishadic verses, and, above all, his own *advaitic* or non-dual experience enabled him to understand the riches of both Hindu spirituality and Christian faith more intensely and led him to experience a deep union with Christ.

¹³⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. vii.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. viii. He explains this as the experience of interiority. It is a lightning flash within. The light of the Spirit within one's self. He says, "It draws man back continually to what is most inward in himself, to the 'cave of the heart' as the Upanishads call it, where God dwells, not as in a tabernacle, within and yet separated from man, but as the living Source of his being, of his very "I". At the height-or in the depth-of this experience, the soul of man is so overwhelmed by the glory of the Presence that his own finite self seems to vanish altogether in its splendour." Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 45.

¹³⁷ Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. x.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.26, n. 4.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

4.3.2 Swami Abhishiktānanda's Interpretation of the Spirit and Christ

Abhishiktānanda begins with the supposition that God abides in the highest heaven and in the cave of the human heart. While the West seeks to contemplate God who is in heaven, the East seeks to contemplate the Divine in the deep recesses of the human heart. From the beginning of his life in India, Abhishiktānanda realised the difference between Greek metaphysics and the metaphysics of *advaita*. The Greeks unravelled the mystery of God at the level of the intellect but the path chosen by Indians to attain the final experience of oneness with the ultimate is an inward journey into one's own consciousness.

When the Greek in his turn rose above the stage of primitive mythology, it was at the level of the intellect that he thought he could recognize and grasp the mystery of the *beyond*. This was in fact the God-given vocation of Hellenism, both in contributing to the evolution of the human mind and in preparing for the Christ-event and for the subsequent development of the Christian faith. The Indian rishi had recognized the atman, which is also Brahman, hidden in the depths of nature and at the centre of his own being.¹⁴⁰

Seeking God in one's own self is an idea central to Upaniṣadic religion.

Abhishiktānanda's theology is a Christian appropriation of this idea. He tried to show that the Indian approach to Christ is through the Holy Spirit that dwells deep within the human self. In his view, Indian Christian theology needs to consider Hindu epistemology and his writings contribute a great deal to this endeavour.

The Upaniṣadic way of knowing is not imparting information or conceptual knowledge; instead, the aim here is to help the seeker to have an attitude of mind and heart to

experience God within. It is realising the "unique presence of the Self within the self."¹⁴¹

This is realising the secret place¹⁴² within a person, which is called *guha* in the Upaniṣads.

It is the "inmost heart of every man; and it is to that inner centre that the Christian is

¹⁴⁰ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 54.

¹⁴¹ Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. 21.

¹⁴² The Upaniṣads speak of the existence of space within the secret place of the heart where resides the supreme Bliss. See Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 8.1.1-6 and Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.9.

invited to penetrate under the guidance of the Spirit, to discover in its fullness the mystery of the atman, the Self, which was glimpsed there by the rishis.”¹⁴³

According to Abhishiktānanda, knowing Brahman in the Upanisads is like knowing a “lightning–flash”¹⁴⁴ in the depths of one’s being. In the unfathomable silence, God is known. “Only in a state of total peace and relaxation, pure receptivity and expectancy, emptied of all thought, desire and volition, a simple transparency” will the Real be manifested in all its fullness.¹⁴⁵ Brahman is “*asti*” (“it is”), “*tad etad iti*” (“that is it”).¹⁴⁶ This way of knowing in the Spirit is not found by reason, one is led to it through contemplation, and it is this kind of thinking found in the Upanisads that enables Abhishiktānanda to believe that “the scriptures of India prepare us to meet the Lord who is the Spirit.”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point: Within the Cave of the Heart*, 1969, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), p. xiii.

¹⁴⁴ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 54. The Upanisads contain many conversations between a teacher (*guru*) and a disciple that offer deep spiritual insights. One such conversation is about the way of knowing. “Master, tell me about Brahman,” asks the disciple of the teacher. The disciple is led to ask this fundamental question: Who am I? This question itself is the revelation of Brahman that reduces the spirit to silence. But silence in turn is truth and reality. As the disciple questions himself, all the externals vanish and he is left with a bare, naked self. The teacher says, surely he who knows the lightning flash within himself has known the Brahman. “In reality, what more could be said? He who has known the ‘lightning flash’ in the depths of his being—he alone has genuinely ‘heard’ the upanishad of Brahman. There really is no sign of Brahman other than this lightning–flash!” Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 54.

¹⁴⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 48.

Brahman eludes every thought and concept.

“Brahman is

other than thinking, beyond non–thinking,

unknown when he is known,

only recognized when everything has disappeared...” Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 52.

“The ineffable God is understood in the innermost depth of one’s own soul.

No word, no thought can ever grasp him,

No eye behold him;

What way remains of reaching him,

But to say, ‘He Is’?” Abhishiktānanda, *In Spirit and Truth: An Essay on Prayer and Life*, 1989, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), pp. 6-7, citing Kaṭha Upanisad 6:12.

¹⁴⁶ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 52.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

He says, following the Upaniṣads, that intellectual tools cannot help to understand God but the “heart alone can hear it.”¹⁴⁸ One has to be receptive to the unique presence of God within oneself. “It is not a question of attaining to the knowledge of God or to the Presence of God, but of recognizing, realizing, that this Presence *is*.”¹⁴⁹ Thus, he lays the foundations for theology in inward experience. Abhishiktānanda admits that the inner experience is not something special to India but common to all men and women. Nevertheless, he points out that it is very pronounced in the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads recognize in humans “a level of consciousness deeper than that of reflective thought, more basic than man’s awakening to himself through sense–perception or mental activity.”¹⁵⁰

Knowing God within means seeing the relation between God and the world as *a-dvaitic*.

The relationship between God and the world is neither one nor two.

It is simply the mystery that God and the world are not two. It is the mystery of unity (*ekatvam*). Advaita or non–duality means precisely this: neither God alone, nor the creature alone, not God plus the creature, not an ontological oneness; creature does not become God or God does not become creature but an indefinable non–duality which transcends at once all separation and all confusion.¹⁵¹

Advaita is not an idea but it is an experience.¹⁵² “God is ‘*Adsum*’ – ‘I am present to thee’.” The human being is also ‘*adsum*’ to God in the depth of his being. True wisdom is the experience of the divine ‘*adsum*’ at the base of my own ‘*adsum*’ to myself.”¹⁵³ According to Abhishiktānanda the non–dual experience, which is at the heart of *advaita* and the experience of divine sonship in the unity of the Spirit, which is at the heart of Christianity, can enrich and enlighten each other.

¹⁴⁸ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 48.

¹⁴⁹ Abhishiktānanda, *The Secret of Arunāchala*, p. 35, n. 7.

¹⁵⁰ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 82.

¹⁵¹ Also Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 98.

¹⁵² Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. 227.

¹⁵³ Abhishiktānanda, *In Spirit and Truth*, p. 6, n. 1.

Abhishiktānanda's theology is not something theoretical but it comes out of his own awareness deep within himself of God's presence everywhere that filled him with the *advaitic* understanding of God. While residing in the caves and contemplating God, he realized a kind of fullness or *pūrṇam* that pervades the whole earth.¹⁵⁴ This is a feeling of the inexpressible awesome presence of God everywhere. God's eternity is present in every moment. It is the mysterious, intimate motion of the Spirit, the mystery that pervades the universe presented within one's self. "Nothing remains but a Presence, not indeed a merely extraneous presence, but that very Presence which has always existed, and within which all things have their being."¹⁵⁵

This experience enabled him to see Christ in every form.¹⁵⁶ He understood the fullness of Christ that is spoken of in Colossians and Ephesians in the light of *advaitic* experience. "Nothing in heaven or on earth can be excluded from the preeminence and the fullness of the Lord Christ."¹⁵⁷ Christ's fullness existed from the beginning. He himself is the beginning and the end. In Christ all things came forth from the Father, all things subsist in Christ and through Christ all things return to the Father. Christ is the "theandric being" in

¹⁵⁴ He points to *Iśā Upaniṣad* that opens with '*purnam adah, purnam idam*': Fullness everywhere, Fullness there, fullness here; From fullness comes forth fullness, and everywhere, one with itself, there remains fullness. Abhishiktānanda, *Guru and Disciple*, p. 43.

¹⁵⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *In Spirit and Truth*, p. 8.

¹⁵⁶ He expresses this thus:

"O my Beloved, in order to give me your grace, why have you hidden yourself beneath the features of Shiva, of Arunāchala, of Ramana the Rishi, and of Sadashiva the naked wanderer?

is all that your divine game?

You assume every form

and you play tricks on us

for you want us to seek you

beyond all forms!

For in the whole world there is no form

that is not yours,

that does not hide you from the ignorant

and does not reveal you those who know!" Abhishiktānanda, *The Secrets of Arunāchala*, p. x.

¹⁵⁷ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 43.

whom “the whole fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily.”¹⁵⁸ The biblical statement, “Christ holds all things together” implies in light of *advaita* that in the universe all things are interconnected and interdependent. They move towards Christ, who is the goal and in the Spirit, in whom all things realize their goal.

Nothing can escape the impulsion of the Spirit which bears everything on earth and in heaven towards the summing up, the ‘recapitulation’, of all things in Christ who will at last be ‘all in all’ (Col. 3:11), and indeed to the even more mysterious consummation when, in and with Christ, all things are subjected to the Father, so that God may be ‘all in all’ (I Cor. 15.28).¹⁵⁹

Abhishiktānanda’s theology of presence relates Christ and Spirit very intimately. Christ is the Fullness and the goal of everything and, without the indwelling presence of the Spirit, the *Pūrnām* and the goal towards which everything is striving could not be realised.

In the same way, his study of the Hindu sacred syllable *OM* and his study of the Bible enabled him to see similarities between the two. *OM* in Hindu theology is the primordial utterance, the un-struck eternal sound or the soundless sound of *Brahman*. “*OM* is the as yet undifferentiated sound in which God utters all that he utters. It is the beginning of his self-manifestation.”¹⁶⁰ Similarly, he pointed out that the Bible teaches that all things come from the Word of God.¹⁶¹ God commanded and they were created.¹⁶² God said: “Let there be light and there was light.”¹⁶³ It is through *OM* that the transcendent God is known.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁸ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 43.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

¹⁶¹ Jn 1:2,3.

¹⁶² Ps 148:5.

¹⁶³ Gen 1:20.

¹⁶⁴ Maitri Upaniṣad 6. 22, 28.

There are really two Brahman to be known,
 Brahman which is sound
 And Brahman which is beyond sound
 Non-sound is revealed by sound.
 OM is the Brahma-sound;
 Going through it, one attains the non-sound...
 As a spider climbs by its thread to free space,
 So through OM the knower reaches freedom...

Likewise, he argued, from the deep silence of the Father, from the bosom of the Father comes the primordial utterance of the Vedic *OM*, the *Vac*, the Word of God the Son. *OM* is the first word pronounced by God the Father. It is through the *Logos*, the Son, the *Vac*, the *OM* that the Father is known.

OM transcends all the three times – past, present and future.¹⁶⁵ Likewise, The Son, the Word of God fills all time and space and transcends all time and space.

There is none that fills all times and yet transcends all times, except the Word of God made flesh, Christ the Lord, who comes from eternity and goes to eternity, who lives by the same life in the bosom of the Father and in the midst of men, and is present in his risen glory at every moment and every place in the universe.¹⁶⁶

OM is at the beginning and at the end. In the Vedic times *OM* was uttered by the priest who led the sacrifice at the beginning and at the end of every scriptural recitation and was “expected to give efficacy to all rites.”¹⁶⁷ In the same way, wrote Abhishiktānanda, all things come through the Son. The Word of God attains fulfilment in him and through him all things return to the Father, the source and the consummation of all. *OM* ends in silence: “*OM* is also the undifferentiated sound which ends in the silence in which all that man says about God, and all that God’s manifestation reveals about him, comes to fulfilment.” In the same way, “Everything comes from God in his Word, and it is in the Word that everything returns to him.”¹⁶⁸

He crosses over with *OM* as his raft
To the other side of space of the heart,
In the inner space,
Into the hall of Brahman.

Abhishiktānanda, *Prayer*, (London: SPCK, 1967), pp. 79-80, n. 3.

¹⁶⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, pp. 81-82, citing *Māṇḍūkya Up.* 1.

What was, what is, what will be
every thing is just *OM*!

And whatever may transcend the three times
That too is just *OM*!

¹⁶⁶ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, pp. 81-82.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

Abhishiktānanda speaks about two processions: the procession of the Son, which is the revelation, and the procession of the Spirit, or *OM*, that ends in silence.

The first procession is the existential foundation of everything that appears manifold in this world. The second reveals in everything the mystery of *ekatvam*, unity, non-duality. The first is the Son's cry of Abba, Father. The second is the *OM* which ends in silence. And it is this double mystery, the very mystery of Being, which from the deepest recesses of his own consciousness, recalls man to himself—to Being, to Awareness of being, to the infinite Bliss of being, **SACCIDANANDA!**¹⁶⁹

Furthermore, *OM* is the “awakening of every man in the secret place of his heart the *guha* to the mystery that is hidden in each moment of the creation. In the *OM* which he utters eternally God, in knowing himself knows every man; in the same *OM* man knows himself and knows God.”¹⁷⁰ In particular, *OM* is the awakening of the Son to the Father. The awakening of the Son to the Father is *homoousios*, one substance that is non-dual.¹⁷¹

Abhishiktānanda writes about Jesus that

In awaking to himself, he awoke to the Father. His individual “I” had vanished even before it appeared, because in the presence of God no creature can “subsist.” But at the very heart of the Father's “I” which resounded at the deepest level of his being, within the inviolable solitude of the divine self-subsistence and uniqueness, “he” also heard resounding an unbelievable “Thou”, addressed to himself, which placed him in being, so that he was at the same time wholly *from* the Father and wholly directed *to* the Father.¹⁷²

Here, Abhishiktānanda sees the eternal life of God through the human deep interior awareness of Jesus. The *advaitic* experience of Jesus explains the ontological oneness of the Son with the Father from eternity.¹⁷³ In the awakening of the Son the Father knows himself. In the light of *advaita* or the oneness of Jesus experienced in interiority, the Upaniṣadic *mahāvakyās* (great sayings) such as *ayam atma Brahma*¹⁷⁴ (this self is

¹⁶⁹ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, pp. 88-89.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹⁷² Abhishiktānanda, *In Spirit and Truth*, p. 9.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁷⁴ Māṇḍūkya Up. 2.

Brahman), *aham Brahma asmi*¹⁷⁵ (I am Brahman), *tat tvam asi*¹⁷⁶ (thou art that), can be paralleled with Jesus' statements such as "the Father and I are one"¹⁷⁷ and "He who has seen me has seen the Father."¹⁷⁸ He does not regard the *advaitic* experience of Jesus as diminishing his individuality; rather, Jesus experiences the Father as an 'other' distinct from his own I. Jesus addresses God as Thou and God addresses the Son as Thou.

He cannot think of himself without being aware of his Father at the very source of this thought of himself; and equally the awareness which he had of himself simply as a man seems to lead him irresistibly to the thought and awareness of the Father deep within, deeper than his own I, the Father from whom he comes and to whom he goes.¹⁷⁹

This, Abhishiktānanda writes, is a mysterious communion, very profound and deep, a mysterious face to face of the Father and the Son in the Spirit. Thus for him, *OM* is at once all "the inner movement of God towards himself and also his inner repose within himself."¹⁸⁰ The mutual gaze or face to face of the Father and the Son is the *ekatvam* or *advaita* or non-duality. It is in the I of the other that 'thou' is discovered, and in this very exchange is the Son's life from eternity. The awakening of Jesus to the Father happens in the Spirit in the interiority of his self. This, Abhishiktānanda declares, is at once *advaita* and communion. The essential *ekatvam* of *advaita* is enriched by communion of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. *Sat-cit-ananda* is Being-in-communion of the Father and the Son in the Spirit. Abhishiktānanda claims that this is the affirmation of Chalcedon.

The fathers of Chalcedon were grasping for this truth when they said that in the one person of the incarnate Christ two natures were united without separation and without confusion. It is here the experience of the ultimate 'non-duality' which the Vedantin regards as the final goal of human life and the experience of divine sonship in the unity of the Spirit, which lies at the heart of our Christian faith meet

¹⁷⁵ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.1.4.10.

¹⁷⁶ Chāndogya Up. 6.8.6.

¹⁷⁷ Jn 10:30.

¹⁷⁸ Jn 14:9.

¹⁷⁹ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 81.

¹⁸⁰ Vandana Mataji, 'Opening talk at the Saptah', pp. 9-13, in Vandana, ed., *Swami Abhishiktānanda: The Man and His Message*, 1986, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), p. 11.

and enrich each other. The Trinity is both advaita and communion. It is a mystery of relation, 'the Real of the Real' or 'satyasya satyam.'¹⁸¹

This again explains how Abhishiktānanda relates Christ and the Spirit and provides a Trinitarian basis for Christology. However, we need to show how Abhishiktānanda speaks of the identity and distinction between the Spirit and Christ. He not only speaks of the non-duality of the Son and the Father but also the non-duality of the Spirit. He says that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and is communicated by the Son. The Spirit is the essential non-duality, *advaita*. The Spirit is the source of perfect communion.

“Communion means to have passed away into the other, to have left oneself behind, and in this very ‘passing’ to have found oneself in truth; it is to know oneself in the other, and in the very depths of the other to have realized one’s true *self*, the ‘I.’”¹⁸²

In the Spirit, he writes, the Father and the Son are fully revealed. Jesus’ departure indicates the coming of the Spirit.¹⁸³ The Spirit guides us into all the truth,¹⁸⁴ the Spirit is the “anointing” that teaches everything,¹⁸⁵ and the Spirit makes known to us in our innermost being the deeper truths.¹⁸⁶ Abhishiktānanda takes full account of the *filioque* issue. The Spirit is the revelation of both the Father and the Son but the Spirit himself is not known apart from the Father and the Son.

The Father only *is* in the procession of the Son and the Spirit. Apart from the Son and the Spirit the Father cannot be known or named, indeed he is not yet even manifested to himself. Apart from the Spirit there is no Father of whom man could speak, or whom he could adore; there is no Being even to make man be. For the Spirit is the very Self of God. Moreover the Spirit cannot be known in the full truth of his ‘Person’, so long as within his essential silence the Word has not sounded forth in a human voice. Until then, the final mystery of the Spirit and of the inwardness of God remains unknown and inaccessible to man. The Spirit reveals

¹⁸¹ Abhishiktānanda, *In Spirit and Truth*, p. 5.

¹⁸² Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 99.

¹⁸³ Jn 16:7.

¹⁸⁴ Jn 16:13.

¹⁸⁵ I Jn 2:27.

¹⁸⁶ Jn 16:12.

the Father and the Son, but he himself is not known until he is revealed as the gift imparted by the Father and the Son.¹⁸⁷

The Spirit reveals Christ but the Spirit cannot be known apart from the Son. This implies that Christological Pneumatology and Pneumatological Christology need each other. Further, in Abhishiktānanda's thought, Christology and Pneumatology complement each other in the economy of salvation. The Son's mission of revealing the Father's love takes place at the level of sight, hearing, sensation and thought. The Spirit's mission takes place at the inner recesses of the human heart. Communication of divine love comes to completion in the Spirit. He defines the essence of sin as not responding to this divine love.

Unlike *advaitic* oneness that renders sin a meaningless expression, Abhishiktānanda takes sin seriously. Sin is a reality for him. It is in the innermost being of one's self that sinfulness is revealed to a person. It is only through the cross of Christ, which atones for sin, that a person can come to God. At the same time, a human being is not passive in the process of restoration but rather plays an equal part in reaching the eternal destiny by realizing the utmost possibility of reaching God.¹⁸⁸ Salvation is both God's act and human act; it is "theandric", at once wholly of God and wholly of man."¹⁸⁹ Salvation is awakening to God or responding to God's love. It is the passing from non-being to being not only of humans but also of the whole cosmos on which it depends: "The whole work of God in creation, incarnation and redemption is aimed at drawing out from man this response of love."¹⁹⁰ Hence, Abhishiktānanda deduces that the Son's mission is inconceivable without the mission of the Spirit. Concerning the role of the Spirit in human

¹⁸⁷ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 96.

¹⁸⁸ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 44.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁹⁰ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 99.

lives, he writes, “the mysterious pneuma (spirit) dwelling within our own pneuma (spirit) moves us from the depths of our being and causes to spring up from our inmost hearts that very word ‘Abba’ in which the Son expresses himself and returns to the Father.”¹⁹¹ That is, the human spirit is one with the Spirit of God. For Abhishiktānanda, this is the place of the ultimate encounter, the meeting of divine Spirit with the human spirit in the inner depth of one’s being. This is the meeting of *Ātman* and *Brahman*. It is not an equivalence of *Ātman* and *Brahman* but human self is truly human self and divine self is truly divine self, and a non-duality that transcends oneness. Here again he gives us another clue to developing a Spirit Christology in terms of *Ātman-Brahman* non-duality.

Finally, Abhishiktānanda suggests that *sat-cit-ānanda*, the mystery experienced in the inmost self of an Indian sage, lies also at the heart of Christianity. “In the depths of his inner silence, as though issuing from the primordial OM, the Indian sage hears the murmur of saccidananda (sat-cit-ananda) – ‘being, awareness of being, infinite joy’ – the expression, still very obscure, of his unutterable experience.”¹⁹² In the Christian mystery of the Trinity, the Son is the revelation of the Father. In the self-communication of Father, the otherness of Father is revealed and the Father is aware of himself. The Spirit is the communion of love, unity and mutual coinherence of the Father and the Son. The “Father is the unmanifested mystery, the Son is the manifested mystery of the Father and the Spirit is communion of the Father and the Son. The Father draws back his Son in the Spirit.”¹⁹³ In the light of the revelation of Father, Son and the Spirit, in their mutual relations the oneness (*ekatvam*) of *sat-cit-ānanda* becomes *koinionia*, the communion. “The Word which reveals within the undivided unity and advaita of Saccidananda the mystery of the Three divine Persons: in sat, the Father, the absolute Beginning and Source of being; in cit,

¹⁹¹ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 83.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

the Son, the divine Word, the Father's Self-knowledge; in ananda, the Spirit of love, Fullness and Bliss without end."¹⁹⁴

As the Hindu sage experiences the mystery of *sat-cit-ānanda* in his inmost being, Abhishiktānanda believed a Christian too, in the depth of his being, "hears the Father addressing to him the same call with which he eternally addresses his only Son, and finds welling up in his own soul the word uttered deep within him by the indwelling Spirit, the Son's eternal response to his Father: Abba, Father!"¹⁹⁵ Abhishiktānanda further writes:

In the depths of the silence of the Spirit, as though issuing from the indwelling Word, the Christian, ... cannot help hearing deep within himself this same *sat-cit-ananda*, which has now yielded up its secret:

Thou art one with me,
as I myself am One with the Father
in the infinite Glory of Being—

the supreme revelation of *SAT*, Being one and undivided;

having received from me
that same knowledge
which I have of him—

the revelation of *CIT*, God's own Awareness that He is;

loved by him and loving him,
as he and I love each other
in the very fullness of our Bliss—

the supreme revelation of *ANANDA*, the Bliss of Being.

This is the Christian Saccidananda – all awareness, all communion. It is the Spirit's own mystery, the ultimate secret of God, in the depths of the Father's heart.¹⁹⁶

For Abhishiktānanda, the experience of *satcitānanda* of Hinduism helps a Christian to go beyond mere intellectualism to the very centre of self.

¹⁹⁴ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 178.

¹⁹⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 73.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

If the Christian experience of the Trinity opens up to man new vistas of meaning in the intuition of Saccidananda. It is equally true that the terms *sat*, *cit*, and *ananda* in their turn greatly assist the Christian in his own meditation on that central mystery of his faith. No single theological language will ever be able to express all that the Gospel has revealed to us concerning God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.¹⁹⁷

Thus, in conclusion we can say what matters for Abhishiktānanda is “the deep things of God,”¹⁹⁸ the penetration to the inward level or the awareness of “the mystery of the *I* in the depths of consciousness.”¹⁹⁹ He very well understood that the Indian ambition in seeking God is to go “Beyond, always beyond.”²⁰⁰ However, for him, as we have mentioned already, this is not a mere theoretical knowledge but a profoundly rich personal experience. He would prefer to call this a theology of experience rather than a theological treatise of a conclusive nature. Murray Rogers comments, “It is not therefore any new theology for which he will be remembered but the lived experience of a new life, a new way of being human, a new way of relationships between cultures, religions and peoples.”²⁰¹

Klaus Klostermaier appreciates Abhishiktānanda’s “trans-sectarian and trans-cultural understanding of spirituality.”²⁰² He comments, “Among the charges of Hindus against Christianity are its worldliness, its superficial religiosity and its ‘Western-ness.’

Abhishiktānanda’s endeavours would go a long way to prove that Christianity is spiritual, deep and universal (also ‘Eastern’).²⁰³ Likewise, George Gispert-Sauch sees

¹⁹⁷ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, pp. 177-8.

¹⁹⁸ Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. viii.

¹⁹⁹ Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. 275. Abhishiktānanda, *Guru and Disciple*, p. xiii.

²⁰⁰ Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. 11.

²⁰¹ Judson B. Trapnell, 'Abhishiktānanda's Contemplative Vocation and Contemporary India', <http://www.infinityfoundation.com/mandala/s_es/s_es_trapn_vocation.htm> [accessed 03 Nov 2004]. (letter to the author, April 12, 2002).

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

Abhishiktānanda's experience and work as "a very important source of theological insight and encouragement to 'cross frontiers' to Hindu forms of spirituality."²⁰⁴

Donald Nicholl says Abhishiktānanda went beyond "the limits of culturally-conditioned Christianity – or, indeed, beyond the bounds of culturally-conditioned Hinduism – and behaved with a freedom which is only possible at the level of the spirit."²⁰⁵ He points out that Abhishiktānanda does not attribute the Upaniṣadic experience to any religion.

According to him,

The Upanishadic experience has nothing to do with any religion whatever, and still less is it a matter of mere logic or epistemology. It is of a different order altogether. It is the ultimate awakening of the human spirit, with which religions are now being confronted, as they were confronted in the past, with the categories, first of mythical, and later of logical thought.²⁰⁶

Concentrating on the inward approach to perceiving God within one's deepest level of consciousness that goes beyond all form, signs and distinctions between the divine and human, he shows the significance of the centrality of the Spirit in theologising. Like the Spirit Christologists he seeks to recover the Spirit-language in Christology. He regards the relationship between the Father and the Son as non-dual in the Spirit, a kind of unity that surpasses all division and separation. In his theology, one encounters both the high and low Christologies. For example, the Christology of *OM* is a high Christology that sees similarities between the uncreated Word *OM* and Word of God, Christ and thus offers an Indian interpretation of Word Christology. However, *OM* is also the eternal awakening of Jesus to the Father in the secret place of his heart, the *guha*. Here he interprets the *homoousios* of the Son with the Father through the earthly life of Jesus. So, as some Spirit Christologists proposed, also for Abhishiktānanda, the Christology from above and

²⁰⁴ Trapnell, 'Abhishiktānanda's Contemplative Vocation'. [accessed 03 Nov 2004].

²⁰⁵ Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. ix.

²⁰⁶ Abhishiktānanda, *The Further Shore*, p. 108.

Christology from below interpret each other. We also encounter a low Christology when he speaks about the *abba* experience of Jesus: Jesus' experience of the Father in him and Jesus in the Father. In other words, this 'in'-ness that is embedded in this experience is what Abhishiktānanda reflects with the use of *advaita* and thus he gives an Indian interpretation of the Chalcedonian formula. This makes Christianity relevant both to Indian Christians and to Hindus and reconciles the patristic tradition and vedantic tradition.

Abhishiktānanda's *advaita* of the Spirit, the non-dual experience of Jesus with the Father are helpful in articulating the identity and distinction between the Spirit and Christ and from this one can infer that Christological pneumatology and pneumatological Christology need each other, although Abhishiktānanda does not speak in those terms.

Abhishiktānanda's interpretation of *satcitānanda* enriches both the Hindu experience of *satcitānanda* and the Christian understanding of the Trinity. In his interpretation, *satcitānanda* becomes personal, interactive and inter-subjective. "Abhishiktānanda holds that the highest Hindu doctrine can be fully understood only in the trinitarian perspective, not at the impersonal level. The highest possible unity with Brahman, the Christian interpretation of the Satcitananda, consists in a unity which is union and communion by which we share in Christ's unity with the Father."²⁰⁷ Thus, his theology of the divine presence, the non-dual experience of Christ with the Father, the non-duality of the Spirit, and his interpretation of the Vedic *OM* and Trinity as *ekatvam* and *koinonia* offer us valuable clues as to how to use the insights of the Upaniṣads to give shape to Indian Spirit Christology.

²⁰⁷ Dhavamony, 'Indian Christian Theology', p. 114.

However, Abhishiktānanda also sets out the difficulties involved in such trans-cultural understanding of spirituality. He himself asks: "Can Hindu interiority be taken over by Christians just as it is?" Can Jesus be interiorised without losing his historicity?²⁰⁸ He realises that here we are confronted with the difference between the Hindu and Christian understanding of history, for an *advaitic* Hindu history has only a symbolic value. Further, a Christian encounters a personal God and takes sin seriously. Abhishiktānanda is aware of these differences and his response is that the concepts "of time and creation, of personality and encounter, need to be examined afresh and deepened in the light of Eastern experience."²⁰⁹

4.4 Conclusion

Thus, Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda offer us Indian expressions of Christ by a creative interaction between Hindu Upaniṣadic religious thought and the Christian message. They show that when the Gospel is incarnated in a new cultural context new perspectives emerge. In the Upaniṣadic tradition, as we have seen, mind and intellect are inadequate tools for knowing the truth; it delves deeper into the inner state of human beings.

Following this, both Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda, methodologically gave importance to direct intuitive experience of self. They brought into their theologies the Upaniṣadic contribution of paying attention to the deepest life of human beings. Hence, their theologies are based on *anubhava* (direct experience of God). They stay close to experiential spirituality, which they believe is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the true basis of experience. Both of them, considering the Hindu aspirations for the Universal Spirit, interpreted the risen Christ as the indwelling Spirit and the experience of Christ as the ultimate Self of our self.

²⁰⁸ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 19.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

Chenchiah emphasises a religion of interiority throughout his work: in the interpretation of Spirit as the universalised Jesus, the light of Christ in human hearts; in the understanding of Jesus as the descent of the Spirit and Jesus as the first fruit of new creation; in the practice of *amrita yoga*, which is the inner guidance of the Holy Spirit, entering into the awareness of the Holy Spirit and in the importance given to prayer meditation and the practice of silence. Both Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda follow a 'both and' approach to experiences. "A both/and approach will be inclusive, open and related, but without domination."²¹⁰ Their pneumatological approach to reality enables them to move from a strict either-or approach to an inclusive approach that overcomes all barriers.

Abhishiktānanda comments that the "Spirit laughs at all man-made barriers."²¹¹ They both proposed a religion that is intuitive rather than analytical or logical. Speech about God is a spiritual act rather than an intellectual discourse. Chenchiah's argument was that the experience of Jesus Christ is richer than the content of the incarnation expressed in intellectual concepts. For Abhishiktānanda "Christ is beyond all concepts."²¹² A concept can never catch a rich experience or transmit the experience.²¹³

Neither considered the Christian message as something foreign but rather believed that it brought something more and this surplus is not the church or the creeds but Christ himself. For Chenchiah, Christ as GodMan unity is something radically new that breaks into history. By interpreting *advaita* as not one but certainly not two in an arithmetic sense and using this to interpret the Father-Son unity and *satcitānanda* as communion, Abhishiktānanda showed that Hinduism and Christianity can be mutually enriching.

²¹⁰ Michael Amaladoss, 'Being a Christian Community among Other Believing Communities', *Current Dialogue*, 26 (1994), 23-34, (p. 32).

²¹¹ Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. 250.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 284.

²¹³ Abhishiktānanda, *Guru and Disciple*, p. xv.

The centrality of the Holy Spirit in Christological reflection is their major contribution to our subject. Their understanding of incarnation, Spirit, and the relationship between the Spirit and Christ offer significant insights from an Indian perspective that could converse with the insights of Spirit Christologists. Such an exercise would be beneficial both to Western Spirit Christologies as well as to Indian thinking on this subject. Therefore, in the next chapter we shall bring Spirit Christologists and Indian thinkers into interaction with one another.

Chapter Five

Indian Theologians and the Spirit Christologists

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to bring the Indian thinkers into a creative interaction with the Spirit Christologists on the various strengths of Spirit Christology and issues in Spirit Christology. As we mentioned earlier, although the Indian theologians did not develop Spirit Christologies in the Indian context, the centrality of the Spirit in their theologising contributes to our study. As Chenchiah envisaged, “even if Indian Christian theology does not add to common faith, it can add to its temper, temperature, colour and mood, tempo and tendency, and give a new face, new value, to what may be called common faith.”¹ This precisely has been the focus of our study of Indian theologians.

This chapter has three sections. In the first section, we shall highlight the Indian contributions to Western Spirit Christologies and the contributions of Spirit Christologists to Indian thinking and we will show how this enriches *Logos* Christology and finally how these insights can lead us further to articulate Indian Spirit Christology. In the second section, we shall highlight the contributions of Indian theologians to the various issues raised in Spirit Christology. The third section is a precursor to the next part of our study. This section concentrates on pneumatology, particularly the theme of the indwelling of the Spirit, which is pertinent to the Indian context.

¹ P. Chenchiah, 'Indian Christian Theological Task', *The Guardian*, 1947, as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 55-81, (p. 62).

5.2 Christology: The Mystery of Incarnation

5.2.1 Chenchiah, Abhishiktānanda, Spirit Christologists: Christology, a *Mārga*

For Chenchiah as we have seen, Jesus, the GodMan, is the descent of the Spirit, a new consciousness, and a new emergence in the evolutionary process. For Chenchiah, Jesus' statement, 'I and my Father are one', expresses a new consciousness, which Chenchiah equates to the *Brahma Vākya*, *Aham Brahmāsmi*, which is the longing of Hinduism.

It can be said, "Indian psychology is the science of the soul, the science of our inner being, the science of consciousness."² It recognises different types of consciousness, from the seeming unconsciousness of matter to the super-consciousness of Brahman.³ The individual conscious self realises within itself the Supreme Self, Brahman. In this context, it is significant to notice Chenchiah's interpretation of GodMan reality as a creative act of the Spirit, a new consciousness.⁴ For Abhishiktānanda, the truth of *homoousion* can be spoken in terms of *advaita*. His non-dual conception in Christology offers a different methodological approach. Jesus awakens to the unique Presence of the Father within him and utters his own 'I' within the Father's eternal 'I.'⁵ In Abhishiktānanda's view, *advaita* is a new awareness and a new consciousness.

² Matthijis Cornelissen, 'Introducing Indian Psychology: The Basics', <www.infinityfoundation.com/mandala/i_es/i_es_corne_psych.htm> [accessed 06 April 2004].

³ Ibid.

⁴ From the Western side, Tillich, in similar fashion, conceives incarnation as 'eternal-God-man-unity' or 'Eternal-God-Manhood.' John Charles Cooper, *The "Spiritual Presence" in the Theology of Paul Tillich: Tillich's Use of St. Paul* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1997), p. 189. Concentrating on the dimension of consciousness, Tillich thinks of the eternal God-Manhood as the fully developed human being. Cooper, *The "Spiritual Presence" in the Theology of Paul Tillich*, pp. 206-207. Also, Robinson, connecting the Old Testament and the New (which Chenchiah would not like to do), says that the descent of the Spirit in the form of a dove at the baptism of Jesus, which may point to the brooding Spirit of God at the creation (Gen 1:2), only shows that "a creative moment had been reached in the consciousness of Jesus." H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit* (Great Britain, Digswell Place: James Nisbet, 1958), p. 124, referring to 2 Cor 4: 6.

⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda: A Christian Approach to Advaitic Experience*, 1974, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCCK, 1997), p. 145. This is what John Baillie tries to explain using Paul's expression 'yet not I, but Christ lives in me' (Gal 2:20), which he calls the paradox of grace since it shows the relationship between divine grace and human freedom. This is an I-thou relationship between God and human beings. God and human

In emphasising the unique consciousness of Jesus, we see a correlation between Indian theologians and the Spirit Christologists. We said earlier that the Spirit Christologists add a psychological dimension based on Jesus' unique consciousness to ontological Christology.⁶ While explaining the relationship between Jesus and the Father, *Logos* Christology plays down the fact that this relationship takes place in deep intimate communion with the Spirit. But when this aspect of interiority is emphasised in the Indian context, which longs for such deep inner communion with God, as Klaus Klostermeier says, Christology becomes a *mārga* (way) that leads to the Ultimate through the realisation of the inner life, rather than a mere conceptual formulation.⁷ "The Indian seeker after God is not looking for intellectual knowledge but for experience, direct and immediate (*pratyakṣa*)."⁸ The seeker or religious person is "a seer of truth (*tattva-sarsi*)."⁹ Precisely this dimension of interiority is the Indian contribution to *Logos* Christology. This is not something unique to this context, for the Spirit Christologists point to this dimension too. Nevertheless, the contributions of the Spirit Christologists seen in the light of Indian emphasis on consciousness bring to the fore the dimension of interiority and adds this dimension to *Logos* Christology.

beings are not opposed to each other but rather "God appears in some sort to be present on both sides of the relationship." John Baillie, *Our Knowledge of God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 233-235.

⁶ For example, Coffey writes, "Not only was Jesus aware at this level of the most profound possible spiritual union with God; he also cleaved to God in the most thoroughgoing possible way. *This* cleaving, unique to him, is the Holy Spirit, uniquely received from the Father as *His* love, appropriated by Jesus, and returned as his own love, the basic love which is the explanation of the fullness of charity in him. David Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', *Theological Studies*, 51 no. 2 (1990), 193-229, (pp. 226-227). Theologians such as Congar and Wong also contribute to this dimension of Christology. Congar says the action of the Spirit in Jesus is seen in his filial life. It is "the dialogue between the Father and the holy but human consciousness of Jesus." Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2 (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983), p. 213. For Wong the phrase 'The Word was with God' in the prologue to the fourth Gospel means that 'The Word was towards God.' He explains that the term 'glory' in v.18 signifies the "manifestation of divine presence," and the term 'truth' signifies the revelation brought by Jesus, "...the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.' Further, the phrase 'in the bosom of the Father' indicates a dynamic movement towards the Father. This dynamic movement towards the Father is revealed in the historical intimate relationship of Jesus with the Father. Joseph H. P. Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', *Gregorianum*, 73 (1992), 57-95, (p. 60).

⁷ K. Klostermaier, *Kristvidya, a Sketch of an Indian Christology* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1967), p. 41.

⁸ Mariasusai Dhavamony, 'Indian Christian Theology', *Studia Missionalia*, 45 (1996), 95-118, (p. 99).

⁹ Ibid.

5.2.2 Zizioulas, Moltmann, Abhishiktānanda: Christology as 'being with'

We have said that Spirit Christology (the complementary approach) offers a Trinitarian basis for Christology. It sees Christ in relation to both the Spirit and the Father. Likewise, Abhishiktānanda's reflection on Christ's *advaitic* union with the Father that happens in the Spirit perceives Christ's ontological oneness in the Trinitarian communion. For these theologians, it is not only Christ's eternal Sonship but also his historical manifestation is characterised by 'being-with' or relationship. We have seen that Moltmann and Zizioulas emphasise the corporate personhood of Jesus. Moltmann sees Jesus as a person in history. He thinks "the picture of the solitary man and his unique work cuts Jesus off from reality and isolates him from the community of men and women."¹⁰ This means that the self is not only gauged along a vertical plane but also along a horizontal plane; "being human means being-in-relationship, human subjectivity is only possible in inter-subjectivity."¹¹ In other words, "the 'person' or 'self' can achieve full realization only when its relationship with divinity (vertical) and humanity (horizontal) develop concurrently, and 'sound through' together, as in the person of Jesus Christ."¹² This is a positive contribution to the understanding of 'self.' However, from the Indian side, Abhishiktānanda takes us much deeper than this.

Drawing from the Upaniṣadic understanding of the correspondences between the cosmos and human beings, Abhishiktānanda sees Christ as the eternal archetype of 'being-with.' In the Upaniṣadic view, there is a correspondence between the elements and functions of

¹⁰ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1990), p. 136.

¹¹ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1999), p. 25.

¹² Gregory Havrilak, 'Chalcedon and Orthodox Christology Today', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 33 no. 2 (1989), 127-145, (p. 144).

the cosmos and the elements and functions of each human being. For example, there is a correspondence between the eye and the sun, between mind (*manas*) and the moon, mouth and fire, breath and wind, hearing and the cardinal points of space.¹³ So the Upaniṣads speak of the cosmos within a human being.¹⁴ Following this idea, Abhishiktānanda writes:

Rightly understood, the experience of the Trinity is the experience of my relation with each of my fellow-men and with every creature. Christ himself is a mystery of pure relation: pure relation in his eternal relation in his being as man-relation to the Father, and relation to men. He has given himself to us, so that in symbiosis with every man he may live his being-as-relation at once in time and eternity. We could say that he reveals himself indeed as the eternal archetype of 'being-with', both in his existence in the depth of every man, and also in the incarnation through which he appeared in the midst of history. Even if this mystery finds in the Incarnation its definitive manifestation, bringing to a climax all history, the whole cosmos and every possible manifestation of being, it was already present and active in all those relations on which the universe is based, which come to their perfection in the communion of consciousness (the 'noosphere' of which Teilhard spoke); and indeed at an even deeper level beyond nous, the mind, in the ultimate centre of man towards which Indian thought from the very beginning has been led.¹⁵

The Upaniṣadic thinking sees 'self' in relation to the cosmos. In the very interiority of the self, the whole cosmos is present. One's personhood is understood in this relationship.

Thus the contribution from the Indian side is this very accent on interiority in understanding 'self' and its relation to the whole cosmos.

5.2.3 Chenchiah, Zizioulas, Moltmann: The Cosmic and Eschatological Significance of Christ

Zizioulas, Moltmann and Chenchiah would subscribe to the view that the synthesis of Christology and pneumatology makes Christology eschatological and corporate. For Chenchiah, Jesus the GodMan is a new phase in the evolutionary process; he is not a private individual but the first fruit of new creation, the one who leads all into this

¹³ Abhishiktānanda, *The Further Shore*, 1975, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), p. 84, n. 85.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-85.

GodMan unity. Chenchiah brings cosmology, Christology and eschatology together.¹⁶ Similarly, in Wong's view, the mutuality of Christology and pneumatology gives the Christ-event a universal significance. "Jesus Christ is at once the climax of the presence and recreative activity of the Spirit of God in the world, and also the starting point for the eschatological mission of the Spirit."¹⁷ An emphasis on this universal dimension of Christ is important for Chenchiah since the Hindu view (advaitic view) stresses universal and timeless truth.¹⁸ Hinduism (advaitic tradition) admits neither real history nor real eschatology. Chenchiah contributes to Hinduism by admitting both dimensions and connecting them creatively. It is the Spirit who gives the cosmic dimension to Christology. The historical Jesus now lives as Spirit and thus becomes our contemporary – this is much

¹⁶ This idea can interact with a number of theologians. Meyendorff points out that a kind of evolutionary approach can be traced in some of the early church theologians. "The Cappadocian Fathers preserved at the same time both the absolute transcendence of divine nature and the eternal, uncreated potentiality of the divine freedom of creation." John Meyendorff, 'Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 27 no. 1 (1983), 27-37, (p. 29). St Basil of Caesarea, commenting on 'Let the earth bring forth' (Gen 1:24) says, "the order of nature, having received its beginning from the first commandment, enters the period of following time, until it achieves the overall formation of the universe." Meyendorff, 'Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology', p. 29, citing *On the Six Days* 5, PG 29: 1160d. Meyendorff comments "Basil would not have objected to modern theories of evolution, as long as the origin of the evolution's dynamism would not be seen as ontologically autonomous but would be attributed to divine will." Meyendorff, 'Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology', p. 29. According to Maximus, the "movement" or dynamism of creation was initiated by God, but it also has God as its ultimate aim: he is 'the principle, the center and the end.'" Meyendorff, 'Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology', p. 29, citing *The Gnostic Chapters* 1:10, PG 91: 1085d. According to Slavophiles-Soloviev, the Russian thinker, the incarnation is the fulfilment of God-manhood and this is the goal of the world that is the "becoming of the world into the Absolute." Meyendorff, 'Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology', p. 30, citing P. P. Zoubov, *Soloviev on Godmanhood*, (Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 1944).

The Indian theologian M. Amaladoss says Jesus is not limited to his historicity and his liberative action is eschatological, continues in history, and moves towards a goal. Michael Amaladoss, 'Speaking of Jesus in India Today', *Theology Digest*, 46 no. 1 (1999), 33-38, (p. 38). Also for Macquarrie Jesus' "importance lies in the fact that he is the first fruits of a new humanity, that the destiny fulfilled by him is revealing of God's purpose for the whole human race." John Macquarrie, 'Some Problems of Modern Christology', *Indian Journal of Theology*, 23 (1974), 155-175, (p. 173). This kind of understanding of Jesus as the first fruit of creation who draws all to himself is seen also in Abhishiktānanda's Christology. He writes: "When deep within himself Jesus awoke to God and learnt by direct experience that he 'comes from the Father and goes to the Father' (John 16:28), then all his brethren were taken up into this awakening; as he soars up to his Father, no member of the human race is left behind." Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 91.

¹⁷ Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', p. 74.

¹⁸ For example, Vivekānanda thinks that a religion cannot be built around a historical man; rather it should be based on eternal principles. He says "...disprove the historicity of the man and the whole fabric tumbles to the ground...The glory of Krishna is not that he was Krishna but that he was the great teacher of Vedanta...Thus our allegiance is to principles always, and not to the person." Swami Vivekananda, *Lectures from Colombo to Almora* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1984), p. 90. About Christianity he says, "If there is one blow dealt to the historicity of that life (Christ's), as has been the case in modern times...if that rock of historicity, as they pretend to call it, is shaken and shattered, the whole building tumbles down, broken absolutely, never to regain its lost status." Vivekananda, *Lectures from Colombo to Almora*, p. 195.

in line with Hindu aspirations as Chenchiah has shown already. Samartha reinforces this point:

A mere recovery of the historical Jesus, however, is of little consequence unless it provides insights that lead us into the future. Too often, the emphasis on Christianity as 'historical' merely serves to tie us down to petrified pegs to the past of which Indians in general, and Indian Christians in particular, have a generous supply. However, there is a forward thrust in the life and work of Jesus Christ that enables his followers to cut the ropes that bind them to the past and to seek new paths into God's future. This pull is inherent in Jesus' teaching on the kingdom of God. He directs our hope to God's future coming towards us, a future which cannot be controlled or manipulated, but to which we can open ourselves in trust and confidence.¹⁹

Thus, both Chenchiah and the Spirit Christologists emphasise the point that the mutuality between Christology and pneumatology adds a cosmic and eschatological dimension to *Logos* Christology. Christology is not only a study of the past but a movement towards the future. However, care must be taken not to lose the significance of the historicity of Jesus. It is very important to stress as the Spirit Christologists do, the historical dimensions of Christ's life in the Spirit and his liberative mission to the poor, oppressed and marginalised along with the eschatological dimension of Christology. Chenchiah's trans-historical dimension of Christology (although he does not lose focus on the historicity of Christ) needs to be buttressed by the emphasis of the Spirit Christologists on the historical Jesus.

5.2.4 Indian Theologians, Early Church Theologians, Contemporary Theologians of the Spirit: The Salvific Significance of Christ

Chenchiah's GodMan is permanently human and is the goal of creation. This idea is similar to the idea of some of the early church theologians. According to St Ignatius the Son of God after resurrection ascends "in the flesh" as the "God-man."²⁰ The Greek

¹⁹ S. J. Samartha, 'Indian Realities and the Wholeness of Christ', *Missiology: An International Review*, x no. 3 (1982), 301-317, (p. 314).

²⁰ John Breck, 'The Two Hands of God' Christ and the Spirit in Orthodox Theology', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 40 no. 4 (1996), 231-246, (p. 243).

Fathers very well see the goal of each human being as communion with God on the basis of the reality of God–man, that is the humanity of Christ *enhypostatized* in the divine person. Consequently, soteriology is not concerned with overcoming sin and with the restoration of sinful humanity but rather with perfection and deification. According to St Athanasius, “it is by the same Word of God, through whom God (the Father) created us, that he also prepares our salvation, so that even if we have sinned, we should not die, but remain immortal.”²¹ The idea of restoring humanity to its original condition is explained in Irenaeus’ idea of recapitulation.²² In the Orthodox view,

Indeed, the Incarnate Son of God, the Christ, was the only One to be able to bring us back into communion with God, for he is the God–man. In His own (divine) person, humanity is assured and ‘enhypostasized’ once for all, thus making attainable communion with God, which is the goal of our creation. In the event of the incarnation itself, the Greek Fathers see our salvation as communion with God and restoration of man to personhood.²³

These theologians connect creation and eschatology. Creation has a goal and it is in its oneness in God.²⁴ Similarly, Chenchiah thinks that the Fact of Christ, the GodMan reality itself, brings the fullness of the new life and this new life rather than sin will occupy the central place in Indian theology. But there is a difference between the Orthodox view and the view of Chenchiah. In the Orthodox view, Christ is God–man. The accent is on the divine person. Christ is *enhypostasized* in the divine person. Meyendorff observes that Byzantine Christology is “‘a–symmetrical’; the Subject of the incarnate God–man remains the eternal *Logos*. That is, the unique *hypostasis* of the Son, even after the incarnation, remains divine, although he has assumed human nature in all of its aspects, including

²¹ St Athanasius, *Against the Arians*, II, 75; PG 26, 305 cited by Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'East Meets West: Gifts of the Eastern to the Whole Church', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37 no. 1 3-22, (p. 7).

²² Breck, "'The Two Hands of God" Christ and the Spirit in Orthodox Theology', p. 243. Refer also to Chapter Two, p. 46, n. 9; p. 69, n. 103.

²³ Aghiorgoussis, 'East Meets West: Gifts of the Eastern to the Whole Church', p. 7.

²⁴ Meyendorff, 'Creation in the History of Orthodox Theology', pp. 29-30.

mortality.”²⁵ But for Chenchiah Christ is GodMan not hyphenated God–man. In the GodMan the accent is on neither God nor Man but on the integration of the two. The divinity does not obscure the humanity nor does the humanity obscure the divinity.

Yet, the early church theologians very ably connected sin and new creation, the cross and the resurrection, which Chenchiah fails to do in his Christology. Christ is anointed in His flesh by the Spirit of God, as Basil reflected, and this same unction by the Spirit of God is extended to humanity as a whole, being present in the humanity of Christ, as Irenaeus reflected. In Maximus the Confessor’s view, Christ restores humankind to its original condition as it was before the Fall and achieves the purpose of bringing human beings into communion with God.. The resurrection signifies new creation, a cosmic event and through the cross Christ addresses human sin, which is also a cosmic event.²⁶

However, Chenchiah’s emphasis on newness of life is a positive contribution to the Indian context. By this we are not negating the traditional view of salvation. But we wish to bring to the fore the internal view to complement the traditional view. “In traditional theology, the relation of Christ to humanity in general was often conceived in a manner too external. The whole influential tradition of ‘Christ in our place,’ which, saw him ‘standing in’ for mankind as a substitute or even as a representative was too impersonal.”²⁷

Abhishiktānanda, emphasising the interior view, speaks of salvation as the passion for union with God. Some contemporary theologians too emphasise the affective side of salvation as union with God. Kärkkäinen explains that in Clark Pinnock’s view, salvation is seen as the embrace of God. Following Bernard of Clairvaux, Pinnock says, ‘if the

²⁵ Breck, "The Two Hands of God" Christ and the Spirit in Orthodox Theology', p. 242.

²⁶ Aghiorgoussis, 'East Meets West: Gifts of the Eastern to the Whole Church', p. 7.

²⁷ Macquarrie, 'Some Problems of Modern Christology', pp. 173-174.

Father kisses the Son and the Son receives the kiss, it is appropriate to think of the Holy Spirit as the kiss.”²⁸ Further, for Pinnock, salvation is “finding our true selves in God.”²⁹ The goal of Christian life is union with God, “enfolded in the Trinitarian love.” Salvation is also described using sexual imagery as the love between a husband and wife. It is the fulfilment of the deepest desire to be united and to be one with the other.³⁰

India longs for “perfect peace and final bliss.”³¹ In the Upaniṣads, *ānanda*, bliss, relates to the experience of oneness with the Absolute. India longs for such oneness. It lives with the realisation that something is missing in one’s existence and there is an awareness of the need to be full and complete. That is why the Spirit’s role in salvation and an understanding of the mystery of the Spirit will help us to reach the hearts of the Hindus and also highlight neglected areas of Christology. With this appraisal, we shall move into the next section on various issues raised in Spirit Christology and highlight the Indian contributions to those issues.

5.3 Issues

5.3.1 The Pre-existence of the Son

By emphasising the incarnation as the idea of eternal man in God, Chenchiah tries to avoid the debate about the humanity of Jesus assumed by the eternal Son of God. He starts neither with the pre-existence of Christ nor the post-existence of Christ but with the fact of Christ, that is GodMan unity. He does not appeal to ideas or concepts about Jesus but to our experience of Jesus as both human and divine. In his view, Christ existed as the

²⁸ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), p. 143, citing Clark Pinnock *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Soners Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1996), p. 150.

²⁹ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 143, citing Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, p. 150.

³⁰ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 144, citing Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, pp. 152-53.

³¹ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 54.

hidden goal of all creation and the whole creation is moving towards this Christhood.³²

That is why for him the GodMan unity is permanent and continues after Jesus'

resurrection.³³ This suggests that our understanding of the definition of eternity and thereby pre-existence depend upon the way we understand the relationship of God to creation.

5.3.2 Time and Eternity

Does eternity mean God is before time and creation? Roy W. Pape points out that:

Since the days of Athanasius the doctrine of creation has had to come to terms with modern scientific cosmologies, and Augustine in spite of his antiquity and 'Latinity' helped to prepare the way for this. He could argue that since time as well as the universe are part of creation, there never was a time when the universe did not exist. So to say God is 'eternal' means that he is prior to the universe not in a temporal sense but in the sense that the universe is absolutely dependent on him for its existence and constitution.³⁴

³² Similarly Macquarrie says, "On the side of his divinity, Christ had always existed as the Logos; on the side of his humanity, he had also existed as the entelechy of the creation, that is to say, as the hidden goal toward which creation was already moving as subatomic particles aggregated into atoms, atoms into molecules, the latter into the heavy molecules needed for the emergence of life, and continuing through the emergence of living cells, the evolution of multicellular organisms, the appearance of rational, personal beings, the cultural history of mankind, the formation of a people of God, the birth of Jesus Christ...To put it in another way, the creation was programmed for Christhood. This is Heilsgeschichte on a cosmic scale." Macquarrie, 'Some Problems of Modern Christology', p. 172.

³³ John Knox takes a similar approach. He says "...if we are intending to speak with any precision at all, we cannot simply identify Jesus, for all his importance, with one of the 'persons' of the Trinity. To do so is both to distort this doctrine of God and to discredit the Incarnation. For in the resurrection his manhood was not abandoned; it was divinely exalted and transfigured. He is still the human being...This continuing humanity is absolutely essential to his 'Lordship.' He was not divested, but his humanity itself became a divine, and divinely redeeming, thing. Such an understanding is not in the least incompatible with the acceptance of the full reality and normality of his earthly manhood. This, as we have often seen cannot be said of the doctrine of his pre-existence." John Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ: A Study of Pattern in Christology* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 111.

³⁴ W. Roy Pape, 'India and the Latin Captivity of the Church, Review Article', *Religion and Society*, xxiv no. 1 (1977), 66-83, (pp. 79-80).

Lampe and Schoonenberg adhere to the view that God creates from within.³⁵ God the creator is considered to be the Soul or Self of the world and the world is God's embodiment. Here the dilemma of God or world is overcome. Schoonenberg says, "... Everything is to be explained by factors within the world, but in the coming into effect of these factors, God has the initiative, he *is* the initiative. This is precisely what the words 'God is Creator' mean."³⁶ At the same time, Schoonenberg is careful to avoid any pantheistic understanding of God. He says, God "works in and behind the world, but we wrong the creative relation if we do not add that he is "above" and "before" the world."³⁷ Chenchiah would adhere to this idea since he follows evolutionary thought. Creation is not a single isolated event; rather cosmology, Christology and eschatology are interwoven.

Pape comments,

The Christian doctrine of creation is not adversely affected by modern theories regarding the limitless nature of the space-time continuum—nor by theories of physical and biological evolution. The idea of creation as a single, initial act of divine intervention has to give way to the idea of a continuing process directed by

³⁵ This thought pattern can be seen in the Wisdom literature and in the Gospel of John. "Wisdom especially is described as with God before the world, but on the other hand as related to his creation. It is born of God or created by Him before everything that is on earth, even before the abyss or chaos; it stands at the beginning of his path; together with God it makes and orders everything that is in heaven and earth (Proverbs 8, 22-36; Wisdom 7, 22-8, 1; Ecclesiastes 1, 4-10; 24; Baruch 3, 32-4,4). Or more generally still: through wisdom God creates not only in the beginning; but he continues to impart life—that is, in scripture, the completion of all being, especially the human." Piet J. A. M. Schoonenberg, *The Christ* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1972), p. 30, citing A. Hulsbosch, *God's Creation* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1965). In John's Gospel, God's Word becomes flesh in Jesus Christ. Thus, "God guides his creation from within, illuminates and awakens it to life. ... Wisdom, word, or law are on the one hand characteristics of God, but on the other hand as personified are distinguished in that they emanate from him, and that the word in the New Testament as become flesh in Jesus stands in dialogue with God. This brings us to the dialogue of grace between God and man." Schoonenberg, *The Christ*, pp. 30-31.

³⁶ Schoonenberg, *The Christ*, pp. 28-29.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29. Likewise, Kasper defines eternity not negatively as timelessness or endlessness but positively as God's free act of love in history. "If God is Free in love, there is in God not only scope for the world and man, God in his eternity has also time for man. God's eternity is then not rigid, abstract and absolute self-identity, it is God's identity in becoming different: God's eternity is then proved by his fidelity in history. Eternity is to be defined, not simply negatively as timelessness, but positively as mastery over time. If God therefore becomes, he becomes, not in a human, but in a divine way. It is not history which imparts identity to God, he is not a God who comes to be, who would first have to grasp and realize himself in time. On the contrary, it is God who gives history its identity, who endows it with coherence and meaning. Here again lies the deeper significance of the idea of pre-existence. It does not imply any projection of time backwards into eternity: it intimates that God in his Son from eternity and in freedom is a God of history and has time for man." Walter Kasper, *Jesus the Christ* (London: Burns & Oates, 1976), p. 185.

God; and this is a gain rather than a loss as certain theologians from India, like keshub Chunder Sen and P. Chenchiah, were the first to realise.³⁸

All these discussions show that our understanding of creation equally modifies the way we understand incarnation and redemption. Incarnation and redemption are not isolated events but a continuous process and they need to be seen from the perspective of the goal of all creation. This is where Chenchiah's interpretation of the Spirit as universalised Jesus and Christ as the first fruit of new creation become relevant. Incarnation is not limited to the history of Jesus but Christ is present now in the process of history. This only reinforces the points that we already made in the third chapter: the link between Christology and pneumatology offers a broader framework to discuss the issue of pre-existence and the relationship between time and eternity. So we say that these issues must be seen in a framework that combines cosmology, Christology and eschatology.

Abhishiktānanda brings an interior dimension to this discussion. He would say that time and eternity meet in one's own consciousness.³⁹ If we begin from the human Jesus, it can be said that time and eternity meet in Jesus' own human awakening to the Father in the Spirit deep within himself. Jesus hears the Thou of God in love addressing him and he utters his own I within the eternal I of the Father.⁴⁰ The Son discovers his 'self' in the 'self' of the Father. This is the *abba* experience of Jesus and it is in this experience of Jesus that the unique Sonship of Jesus is perceived.⁴¹

³⁸ Pape, 'India and the Latin Captivity of the Church, Review Article', p. 80.

³⁹ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, pp. 137-138.

⁴⁰ Abhishiktānanda, *In Spirit and Truth: An Essay on Prayer and Life*, 1989, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), p. 13.

⁴¹ Similarly, Raymond Brown argues that "Jesus' addressing of God as *abba* shows a family relationship. By this, Jesus claimed a special relationship to the Father. The way in which Jesus speaks of God as Father certainly indicates that he claimed a special relationship to God. But it remains difficult to find in the Synoptic account of the public ministry an incontrovertible proof that he claimed a unique Sonship that other men could not share. However, it may well be here that the quest for absolutely scientific proof causes us to miss the woods for the trees. One could argue for a convergence of probabilities that Jesus did claim to be God's unique Son. It is when we stand before such a question that we realize the frustrating limitations

In this awakening only the Abba, Father, 'Father, here am I your child!' bursts from man's heart in response to the call, 'Son, here am I, your Father!' that fills the eternity of God. Who speaks these words and who answers? The Word, in his timeless, eternal generation? Or the Word made flesh, in his temporal human consciousness? Or such and such an individual, in his particular spatio-temporal situation? It scarcely matters...⁴²

What matters is the awakening in the Spirit that transcends all divisions of time and space, between creature and creator. It is this unique, unrepeatable experience of Jesus that enables us to recognise the eternal glory of his sonship which he enjoys from all eternity. The Son and the Spirit are in this sense inseparable. It is in this indivisibility that Abhishiktānanda can bring the Son of God and the Son of Man together.⁴³

Each human awakening is a "sacrament of eternity."⁴⁴ It is to this eternal dimension that Chenchiah points when he speaks of Jesus as the GodMan reality ushering all into a new phase of life. C. F. D. Moule notes that when Paul and John speak about Christ's pre-existence they are only "drawing out the implications of their experience of him as transcending the temporal."⁴⁵ Pre-existence means "the new life which they found through Jesus. They experienced Jesus himself as in a dimension transcending the human and the temporal. It is not just that, owing (somehow) to Jesus himself, alive and present, a divine dimension such that he must always and eternally have existed in it."⁴⁶ This offers an alternative way of looking at the whole issue of pre-existence. Talk about pre-existence, time and eternity can start from the human experience of Jesus in the present rather than the other way round, starting from the pre-existent *Logos*. Our East-West

imposed on research by the nature of the material we work with – material magnificently illuminated by post-resurrectional faith, but for that very reason far from ideal for scientific study." Raymond E. Brown, *Jesus God and Man: Modern Biblical Reflections* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1968), pp. 91-92.

⁴² Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 110.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-112.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁴⁵ C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* (Cambridge: University Press, 1977), p. 138. Similarly, Knox says that the terms divinity and humanity do not imply ideas about Christ but the church's experience of Christ. Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, pp. 54-55.

⁴⁶ Moule, *The Origin of Christology*, p. 138.

interaction suggests that pre-existence can be interpreted in a profoundly new way. Pre-existence means experience of Christ here and now in a dimension transcending the human and temporal.

5.3.3 Christological Pneumatology or Pneumatological Christology

We have discussed how all the approaches of Spirit Christology emphasise the cosmic significance of Jesus without obscuring the historicity of Jesus. Likewise, Chenchiah's and Abhishiktānanda's emphasis on the cosmic significance of Jesus does not obscure the historical Jesus, for both regard the incarnation as a real historical event yet feel the need to go beyond history and emphasise that Christ is beyond history. Chenchiah is explicit in showing the reasons for such a move in the Indian context. As we have said earlier, higher Hinduism does not rest content with the historical basis of Christianity since it does not consider personality as an ultimate factor. Therefore, for a Hindu, a historical fact is the temporal manifestation of an eternal idea. Behind the person of Jesus is the immutable eternal idea of which He is a manifestation.

Chenchiah says "when we press on the attention of the Hindu to Jesus of Nazareth, he is always looking through and behind Him for the idea of which He is the embodiment."⁴⁷

In addition, for a Hindu,

what is universal cannot be a fact but the spirit. This belief presents itself in higher Christian thinking in the relation of Jesus to the second Person in the Trinity. The Hindu wants to be in touch with—the Logos which became Jesus—with the Holy Spirit which is the immanent Christ—rather than with Jesus of Nazareth. The former seems to possess a universality lacking in the latter.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ P. Chenchiah, 'Christianity and Hinduism', *Pamphlet*, 1928, as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 195-220, (p. 207).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Yet, this does not lead to denial of the historical Jesus since a Hindu is quite at home with the worship of personal deities and the universal Spirit side by side. "The most uncompromising Adwaitin has been the most zealous follower of historical deities. If the Hindu mind can reconcile personal devotion with an impersonal philosophy, faith in Jesus need not present an insurmountable obstacle."⁴⁹ There is another reason why we need to speak about the cosmic significance of Jesus. Hinduism does not hold an either-or view of truth. Truth is inclusive and comprehensive and all contradictions can only be a partial view of truth. Moreover;

Truth cannot be regarded as a pathway or a road accessible only to a few. It is rather like light and air, a universal enfoldment of life, available to all, wherever situated. ... If Christ is the truth, it follows to the Hindu way of thinking that he pervades Hinduism and Christianity alike. If He is the centre, He must be reachable from every point in the circumference. To the Semitic, truth is ethical, dividing the right from the wrong, good from the bad. To the Hindu truth is the support uniting the divisions on the surface.⁵⁰

Thus, Chenchiah gives us ample reasons why we need to reflect on Christology from the perspective of the Spirit and go beyond the historical particularity of Christ. Christ as *mahāśakti* transcends his historical particularity. The Spirit gives Christ the universal dimension. The historical Jesus becomes universal by "reproducing himself in the children of God."⁵¹ This discussion also shows that Christ's personhood is seen as a corporate personhood in both his earthly dimension and the dimension that transcends historical particularities.

Unlike Chenchiah, Zizioulas and Moltmann do not identify the Spirit with Christ. They maintain the identity and distinction between the Spirit and Christ. Although Chenchiah

⁴⁹ Chenchiah, 'Christianity and Hinduism', *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 207.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

⁵¹ P. Chenchiah, 'Professor Kraemer and Syncretism', *The Guardian*, 1951, pp. 188-200, as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 173-181, (p. 179).

emphasises that the Spirit models itself after the pattern of Christ, his identification of the risen Christ with Spirit makes the identity and distinction between Christ and Spirit ambiguous. Had Chenchiah's theology maintained the distinction between Christ and the Spirit it would have given ample room to speak about Christological pneumatology and pneumatological Christology in dialectical interaction.

Abhishiktānanda speaks of the non-duality of the Spirit. The procession of the Spirit is not external to the Son. "...The procession of the Spirit is not something external to the going forth of the Word, rather it is the innermost mystery of the Son. This procession is in no sense a going *beyond* the Son, for in the mystery of God there is no beyond, but only further spheres of inwardness."⁵² Therefore, the Spirit is an inseparable part of the Son. The Spirit and the Son are neither two nor one but *advaita*. Perhaps this is what Kilian McDonnell means when he explains that Son and Spirit are not two centres, but rather "an inner penetration of persons", "one superimposed on the other." One is interior to the other without mixture or confusion.⁵³ As Panikkar explains, "Divine immanence is first of all a divine immanence: God is immanent to himself, and only God can be immanent to himself."⁵⁴ There is "constant deepening, permanent 'interiorization'" in God.⁵⁵ This way of thinking avoids the question as to whether the Son is prior to the Spirit or the Spirit is prior to the Son and also the question about pneumatocentrism or Christocentrism. Further, the inclusive understanding of the Spirit and the Son, or the *advaita* of the Spirit in Abhishiktānanda's terms, offers us a new model of the Trinity.

⁵² Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, pp. 111-112.

⁵³ McDonnell, 'Theological Presuppositions in Our Preaching about the Spirit', *Theological Studies*, 59 (1998), 219-235, (pp. 225-226).

⁵⁴ Raymond Panikkar, 'Toward an Ecumenical Theandric Spirituality', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 5 no. 3 (1968), 507-534, (p. 528).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

5.3.4 The Trinity

David Cunningham, speaking about the doctrine of Trinity and its relevance to both Christians and non-Christians, says that we need “an entirely different, and non-dichotomous conceptuality.”⁵⁶ Abhishiktānanda’s *satcitānanda* offers this possibility.

Unlike *advaitic* monistic *satcitānanda*, Abhishiktānanda’s *satcitānanda* is a communion, a *perichoretic* relationship, unity in difference.

Abhishiktānanda’s interpretation of the Trinity can interact with Coffey’s mutual love theory, which holds that the Holy Spirit is the mutual love bestowed by the Father on the Son and by the Son on the Father. As bestowers Father and Son “stand in opposition to each other.”⁵⁷ This is “‘unity-in-difference’”⁵⁸ Abhishiktānanda seems to speak about the mutuality between the Father and the Son by using inclusive methodology, that is, the Son and the Father are in each other and the Son and the Spirit are in each other. This view can also interact with the understanding of *perichoresis* in the early church theologians.

According to John of Damascus the idea of *perichoresis* means the three *hypostases* are:

within each other, not so that they are confused, but so that they contain one another, in accordance with the word of the Lord: I am in the Father and the Father is in me... We do not say three gods, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, we say only one God, the Holy Trinity, the Son and the Spirit going back to only one Principle, without composition or confusion, quite unlike the heresy of Sabellius. These Persons are united, not so that they are confused with each other, but so that they are contained within each other. There is between them a circumincession without mixture or confusion, by virtue of which they are neither separated nor divided in substance, unlike the heresy of Arius. In fact, in a word, the divinity is undivided in the individuals, just as there is only one light in three suns contained within each other, by means of an intimate interpenetration.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ David S. Cunningham, *These Three Are One: The Practice of Trinitarian Theology, Challenges in Contemporary Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), p. 41.

⁵⁷ Coffey, 'The Holy Spirit as the Mutual Love of the Father and the Son', p. 221.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 221-222.

⁵⁹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, p. 37, citing *De fide orthodoxa*, I, 8 (PG 94, 829).

In the above quotation, the terms 'within,' 'contain,' 'without confusion,' 'without mixture' are significant. This is what Abhishiktānanda tries to show with his *advaitic* framework. *Advaita* is neither monism nor dualism but a kind of oneness that transcends all separation. *Perichoresis* points to the "in-existence of the persons within each other."

⁶⁰ This reflects oneness and the differences within God. *Circumincession* (as the Greek theologians of the early church interpreted) means they are in one another. The term *Circuminsession* (as the Latin theologians of the early church interpreted) means they are turned towards one another, open and given to one another.⁶¹ *Perichoresis* means "both 'to make room' and 'to contain.' It has an active nuance as mutual movement as well as mutual indwelling, which gives expression to the dynamic nature of the consubstantial Communion between the three divine Persons, in which their differentiating properties instead of separating them actually serve their oneness with one another."⁶² In this sense, Abhishiktānanda's *advaita* is similar to *perichoresis*. His interpretation of *OM* and *Satcitānanda* resonate with the concept of *perichoresis*. For him the Trinitarian unity can only be understood in terms of communion. The invocation of *abba* and the *Vedic OM* both symbolise the union and communion between the Father and the Son.⁶³ Therefore, as Panikkar affirms, "the mystery of the Trinity shows us that in reality God is immanent to himself, that there is in him a sort of bottomless interiority, infinitely interior to itself."⁶⁴ We must now examine whether the Indian accent on interiority is helpful in addressing the impassibility of God, which is a difficulty in the *Logos* conception.

⁶⁰ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, trans. by David Smith (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983), p. 37.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² T. F. Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), p. 140.

⁶³ R. H. S. Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India* (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1977), p. 417.

⁶⁴ Panikkar, 'Toward an Ecumenical Theandric Spirituality', p. 528.

5.3.5 The *Apatheia* of God and the Question of Suffering

We have seen that Spirit Christology underscores divine suffering over against divine *apatheia*. Moltmann's emphasis on divine pathos and Lampe's emphasis on the continuous kenosis of God as Spirit shows their sensitivity in relating divine suffering to human suffering.

Turning to Abhishiktānanda, we have seen that he uses the term *Shekinah* to speak about *Ātman*, the indwelling presence of the Spirit. However, he does not draw our attention to God's suffering and God's participation in suffering which the term *Shekinah* is able to convey. "According to late Jewish writings, the *Shekinah* in its earthly history of suffering turns to God himself."⁶⁵ The *Shekinah* is the "divine 'companion in suffering.'"⁶⁶ The *Shekinah* is present among the people, accompanying them into exile.⁶⁷ The *Shekinah*, like a slave and a servant, provides for Israel's needs, goes ahead of Israel in the wilderness carrying the torch, lifts the people up and carries them. The *Shekinah* is one with Israel in her suffering and humiliation and thus suffers along with the people.⁶⁸

"In his *Shekinah*, God renounces his impassibility and becomes able to suffer because he is willing to love."⁶⁹ The concept of *Shekinah* makes it clear that God's *Shekinah* is not only "a mode of his presence", but also "God's counterpart in God himself."⁷⁰ This means, "in his descent the indwelling and co-suffering Spirit of God also turns to God himself ..."⁷¹

These theological insights need to be integrated with the aspect of the indwelling presence of God. Abhishiktānanda's emphasis on the indwelling presence of God needs to be

⁶⁵ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 12.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

complemented by the kenosis of the Spirit who is a co-sufferer with Christ, as Moltmann says, and a co-sufferer with humans, as Lampe emphasises.

Chenchiah explains Jesus' suffering in terms of a dialectical tension between attachment and detachment.

Incarnation in the true sense represents the creative mean between man and God. It creates a balance between natural life and the new life that detaches us from the old. If incarnation means a temporary descent of God into life, the new life does not create. If it involves absolute identity with life, then incarnation does not mark any progress. Incarnation is the creative expression of a life, which, though it enters into this life, yet acts with puissant power from its own centre.⁷²

Jesus' vicarious suffering means that Jesus "suffers and dies, yet remains himself attached to and yet detached from humanity."⁷³

In Chenchiah's view, "Identity that destroys the difference between two persons renders all such vicarious life impossible."⁷⁴ We need to remind ourselves at this point that for the early church salvation was the underlying concern in the interpretation of the mystery of the incarnation. If Christ was only a man, he did not have the power to save humanity. If Christ was only divine then he did not save humanity through suffering. This dilemma based on the Hellenistic presupposition, led them into Christological controversies.

Chenchiah's Indian approach of dialectical tension between attachment and detachment seems to offer a solution to the dilemma that the early Church faced.

⁷² Chenchiah, 'Vanaprastha Asrama: Assesment', in *Asramas, Past & Present*, by P. Chenchiah, V. Chakkarai, A. N. Sudarisanam (Madras: Indian Christian Book Club, 1941), pp. 130-149, p. 136.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

The way we understand God's eternity, the impassibility of God and God's involvement with the world leads us to the analysis of human liberation. The following two sections are on the relationship between Spirit Christology and Christopraxis.

5.3.5.1 Spirit Christology, Mysticism and Christopraxis

Twin realities confront us in the Indian context, namely poverty and plurality. In this context, where the majority of population undergo suffering in various forms, the concept of the impassibility of God is unhelpful and even detrimental. According to Moltmann, Christology is the foundation of new life and salvation. Christology and ethics are interconnected. "Theory and practice cannot be separated even in Christology. Their intertwinings are so complex that they resist the imposition of any simple pattern."⁷⁵

Theological Christology and Christopraxis need each other since Christology is not a theoretical understanding of Christ but learning about him in "the praxis of discipleship."⁷⁶ Christology is studied from the perspective of the community of Christ. "Christopraxis is the source from which Christology springs."⁷⁷ Hermeneutics of origin needs to be complemented by the hermeneutics of effects.⁷⁸

We now need to examine whether Abhishiktānanda keeps a balance between mysticism of soul and social responsibility. Abhishiktānanda speaks about social responsibility. In his view, solitude does not throw a person into meaningless isolation but, paradoxically, one who has experienced solitude is able to enter most truly into communion with others.⁷⁹ It is not a wisdom that teaches us to escape from the world but a wisdom of the person who, in his or her own solitude, realizes the mystery of self and the world by being free from all

⁷⁵ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1990), p. 41.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁷⁹ Abhishiktānanda, *In Spirit and Truth*, p. 37.

superficial individuality.⁸⁰ Service to humankind and creation is the way of one who has realised the fullness of God everywhere. For those who have realised this fullness there is no duality between sacred and profane, for everything is holy and under the domain of the Spirit.⁸¹ Indeed, Abhishiktānanda has a lofty view of community. In his view, God in his eternal existence of love and communion, is the ground of all existence and human communion. The unity of the Son and the Father as the mysterious face to face between the Father and the Son gives an ontological basis to the understanding of human selfhood.⁸² As the Son discovers his 'I' in his relationship to the Father, human selfhood is understood in relation to the other. "Every human awakening is nothing but opening oneself to the other which reflects the mystery of God's Trinitarian life itself."⁸³

Despite these reflections, Abhishiktānanda's emphasis on acosmism leaves one with the suspicion that his mysticism leads to the negation of world, body, matter, and gives priority to the individual, human person over the social life. He himself had an "irresistible call to the acosmic life"⁸⁴ and led the life of a *sannyāsa*. However, he is clear that it is not the way for all.⁸⁵ He thinks that there is a need for some to take up such a life in order to serve as challenging representatives of life lived in openness to the Spirit.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point: Within the Cave of the Heart*, 1969, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), p. 63.

⁸¹ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 154.

⁸² Anthony C. Thiselton makes the same point. He says that "self-giving, interactive, interpersonal love" characterises the nature of the Triune God. Anthony C. Thiselton, *Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self: On Meaning, Manipulation and Promise, Current Issues in Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), p. 155. The statements 'The Father and I are one' (Jn 10:30; cf. 17.22), 'whoever has seen me has seen the Father' and 'I am in the Father and the Father is in me' (Jn 14.9, 10) that show divine oneness becomes a model (Jn 17:10-24) for human community life. Thiselton, *Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self*, p. 156.

⁸³ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 140.

⁸⁴ Abhishiktānanda, *The Further Shore*, p. x.

⁸⁵ Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. 294.

⁸⁶ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, pp. 151, 152, 153.

In contrast, Moltmann, drawing from the Old Testament, speaks about the Sabbath mysticism. Sabbath mysticism understands the plight of the hungry and the oppressed. It shares bread with the hungry, effects cancellation of debts, executes justice for the oppressed⁸⁷, wretched⁸⁸, fatherless and the widowed.⁸⁹ It recognises “the spirituality of the earth.”⁹⁰ The land is not endowed with a utilitarian value but is “respected in its dignity as God’s creation.”⁹¹ Rest is given to the land to renew its strength.⁹² “When ‘the Spirit is poured out from on high...then justice will dwell in the wilderness and righteousness abide in the fruitful field, and the fruit of righteousness will be peace’”⁹³ The understanding of God deep within oneself does not lead to acosmism but to a deeper involvement in the world.⁹⁴ Moltmann writes,

The experience of God deepens the experiences of life. It does not reduce them, for it awakens the unconditional Yes to life. The more I love God the more gladly I exist. The more immediately and wholly I exist, the more I sense the living God, the inexhaustible well of life and life’s eternity.⁹⁵

⁸⁷ Ps 146:7; Ps 103:6.

⁸⁸ Isa 11:4.

⁸⁹ Deut 10:18; Ps 82:3; Isa 1:17.

⁹⁰ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 97.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Lev 25: 1-7.

⁹³ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 129, referring to Isa 32:15ff.

⁹⁴ Moltmann citing Augustine, *Confessions*, x, 6,8 where Augustine asks the question ‘What do I love when I love God?’ and goes on to answer this question.

“... what do I love when I love you? Not the beauty of any body or the rhythm of time in its movement; not the radiance of light, so dear to our eyes; not the sweet melodies in the world of manifold sounds; not the perfume of flowers, ointments and spices; not manna and not honey; not the limbs so delightful to the body’s embrace: it is none of these things that I love when I love my God. And yet when I love my God I do indeed love a light and a sound and a perfume and a food and an embrace – a light and sound and perfume and food and embrace in my inward self. There my soul is flooded with a radiance which no space can contain; there a music sounds which time never bears away; there I smell a perfume which no wind disperses; there I taste a food that no surfeit embitters; there is an embrace which no satiety severs. It is this that I love when I love my God.’

When I love God I love the beauty of bodies, the rhythm of movements, the shining of eyes, the embraces, the feelings, the scents, the sounds of all this protean creation. When I love you, my God, I want to embrace it all, for I love you with all my senses in the creations of your love. In all the things that encounter me, you are waiting for me.

For a long time I looked for you within myself, and crept into the shell of my soul, protecting myself with an armour of unapproachability. But you were outside – outside myself – and enticed me out of the narrowness of my heart into the broad place of love for life. So I came out of myself and found my soul in my senses, and my own self in others. Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 98.

⁹⁵ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 98.

Zizioulas, reflecting from the Orthodox point of view, brings a community dimension to the ascetic life for he sees a connection between ecclesial *hypostasis* and the ascetic life. He argues that who we are emerges in community or church, which gives an identity to a person; this is termed ecclesial *hypostasis*. The ecclesial *hypostasis* by drawing its being from the being of God, transcends the biological relationships and precisely this makes ecclesial *hypostasis* ascetic. The ecclesial *hypostasis* frees one from all biological bondage and enables a person to enter into a universal love. The body is “liberated from individualism and egocentricity and becomes a supreme expression of *community* – the Body of Christ, the body of the Church, the body of the eucharist.”⁹⁶ It sees body from a new perspective. Body is a “concept of communion and love.”⁹⁷ “The body transcends together with its individualism and separation from other beings even its own dissolution, which is death.”⁹⁸ The dialectic of ‘already but not yet’ is realised here.

We can find similarities between Zizioulas’ ecclesial *hypostasis* which is a dialectic of ‘already but not yet’ and Chenchiah’s dialectic of attachment and detachment between *grihista* and *sannyāsa*. Chenchiah’s dialectic of attachment and detachment teaches us in Hindu fashion to avoid both the extremes, *grihista* and *sannyāsa*; attachment as well as renunciation. It is “placing oneself between the two great magnets – God and the world. Placed between them, man attains to the detachment necessary for fuller life.”⁹⁹ Thus, Chenchiah’s dialectic of attachment and detachment, Zizioulas’ ecclesial *hypostasis* and Moltmann’s Sabbath mysticism suggest that a deeper understanding of God lead to a meaningful involvement in the world. And the following quote from Samartha offers a good conclusion to this section:

⁹⁶ John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985), pp. 63-64.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Chenchiah, ‘Vanaprastha Asrama: Assessment,’ pp. 133-134.

Throughout the long history of Hinduism, the dualism between asceticism and worldliness, between mystical experience and historical participation, has persisted in the heart of its religious and social life. Under the pressure from contemporary Indian realities, perhaps both Hindus and Christians can work together towards shaping that spirituality which is at once rooted in God and sensitive to human needs.¹⁰⁰

5.3.5.2 New Creation: Human Liberation and Ecology

New Creation is the main theme in Chenchiah's theology. In his view, new creation is new birth in the Spirit. New Creation comes from above, from without. It is "new birth with new endowments."¹⁰¹ It is "viewed as an outburst or inrush into history."¹⁰² Chenchiah focuses on the ascension of humanity towards a new era in history, in the process of evolution. The Kingdom of God means becoming children of God, which is the next stage in the evolution of the cosmos. However, it is not only a spiritual growth but also a physical well-being. The new vitality that Jesus brings includes the blind receiving sight, the healing of the deaf, the cleansing of lepers, the raising of the dead and in the moral realm, replacement of selfishness in the hearts of people by the spirit of love. The Kingdom of God is a new social order in the power of the Spirit. When Chenchiah mentions the kingdom of God as a new social order he has a broader vision.¹⁰³ In his view, there is no compartmentalisation of the spiritual and secular spheres of life. The new order of life springs from the Christian life that is in harmony with the Spirit's working in the heart. "The effort of the Christian is to realise this new creation in the world-order by

¹⁰⁰ Samartha, 'Indian Realities and the Wholeness of Christ', p. 314.

¹⁰¹ P. Chenchiah, 'Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, ed. G. V. Job et al (Madras: A. N. Sudarisanam, 1938), 47-62, (p. 55).

¹⁰² Chenchiah, 'Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths', *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 56.

¹⁰³ Thangasamy notes that Chenchiah's new social vision includes "suggestions for the organisations of mobile service groups to undertake relief work on occasions of famine, fire, pestilence and storms; co-operatives; experiments in common farming ... housing schemes and co-operative banks." *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings*, p. 45.

appropriating the new power. The ethics, the doctrines and the dogmas of Christianity crystallise this fact and enshrine this faith.”¹⁰⁴

However, this is not confined to human beings but it extends to the whole of creation.

That is why Chenchiah speaks of Jesus as “new cosmic energy” or *śakti*, that is the manifestation of a new creative act of God.¹⁰⁵ Like Chenchiah, Moltmann says that the Spirit enters as “the divine quickening power of the new creation of all things, the power empowering the rebirth of everything that lives.”¹⁰⁶ But the difference between Chenchiah and Moltmann is that Chenchiah places emphasis on the fact of Christ, the fact of his being GodMan unity rather than his death on the cross. He identifies the risen Jesus with the life-giving divine Spirit. Therefore, he sees the resurrection as more significant than the cross. Although Moltmann presents a similar view, for he sees the risen Christ as infused by the life-giving divine Spirit, his theology links resurrection with the cross. “The cross is the event in which God’s love happens. God exists as love in the event of the cross.”¹⁰⁷

Further, about the Spirit, Thiselton comments, “The Holy Spirit, however, acts as more than a ‘new force.’ Woven into the logic of the work of Christ and the Spirit is the *inter-personal, interactive character of love*. Love is given and received by two or more persons *in relationship*. The cross *restores* this.”¹⁰⁸ This dimension of Spirit as inter-personal, interactive love can be a contributory element to Chenchiah’s theology of new creation and

¹⁰⁴ Chenchiah, ‘Jesus and Non-Christian Faiths’, *Rethinking Christianity in India*, p. 56.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, pp. 94-95. Also, Rosato’s study on Barth’s pneumatology sheds light on this eschatological and cosmological dimension of the Spirit. He explains that for Barth, Spirit is “the Spiritus Creator who bestows divine life on the lost cosmos.” The Spirit is “the harbinger of the new eon cosmos, the crystallization-point of a new order of being, drawing matter which is still groaning under the old order of sin and death to Himself. The Spirit is already operative in the social sphere driving man’s efforts towards the ultimate unity with God which he has not yet attained. He is the eschatological power of victory over evil and the pledge of the totally new being of the universe.” Philip J. Rosato, *The Spirit as Lord: The Pneumatology of Karl Barth* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1981), pp. 25-26.

¹⁰⁷ Moltmann, *The Crucified God* (London: SCM, 1974), p. 244 cited in Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of Jürgen Moltmann* (Edinburgh T&T Clark: 1995), p. 119.

¹⁰⁸ Anthony C. Thiselton, *Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self*, p. 155.

can lead us to speak of Christological pneumatology and pneumatological Christology as complementing one another.

5.4 Conclusion

We have shown that the Indian thinkers and the Spirit Christologists could interact on a number of points. The Spirit Christologists and Indian thinkers enrich and correct each other. The special contribution of Indian thinking is interiority, the dimension of the Spirit. India delves deep within for the message of the Spirit. The centrality of the Spirit in theologising reveals an immanent God that does not negate the transcendence of God. This emphasis brings to the fore the intuitive dimension in Christology. Christology becomes a *mārgā* rather than a conceptual formulation. The *OM* and the *abba* experience of Christ, *perichoresis* and *advaita* become different ways of interpreting the same mystery. Further, both the Spirit Christologists and the Indian thinkers emphasise the corporate, eschatological dimensions of Christology. The Christology of 'being-with', in relationship, becomes more relevant and meaningful than to see Christ as 'Logos become flesh', a solitary being who came from heaven to save humanity. The eschatological aspect of Christology makes Christology a study of movement towards the future rather than a study of the past. The pre-existence of Christ, the meaning of God as eternal are seen in a broader framework that integrates cosmology, Christology and eschatology. Christ's pre-existence is discerned in the experience of Christ as the one who transcends temporality.

The Indian accent is predominantly on aspects such as interiority, *anubhava* or direct experience of Christ, contemplation and non-attachment. The Spirit Christologists contribute to Indian thinking by emphasising the mutuality between pneumatological

Christology and the Christological pneumatology, the relation between the historical and eschatological and the Spirit's role in creation and the world.

On the question of divine suffering, Chenchiah has very little to contribute and Abhishiktānanda does not touch this point in his theology. The question of divine suffering and divine participation in human suffering is pertinent to the Indian context. The Spiritual quest cannot be separated from the socio-economic dimensions. However, as we have seen, Chenchiah does contribute to thinking on new creation and human liberation by emphasising the cosmic significance of Christ. Nevertheless, along with the cosmic dimension of Christianity it is significant to point to the authentic disclosure of God's involvement in history in the life of Jesus. Although both Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda attempt to stress the historicity of Jesus, it is done from the outlook of recovering the spiritual dimension and sufficient attention is not given to his earthly life, as the Spirit Christologists show.

The Indian theologian Sathianathan Clarke is of the view that both the historical particularity and the cosmic dimension of Christ will be relevant to the Third World context which is stricken by poverty, oppression and discrimination. He says,

Indian Christian theology needs confidence to know and trust Jesus as the exalted and cosmic one; courage to discover and experience Jesus as the one in solidarity with the lowly and afflicted; and imagination to hold both these dimensions together in the God-man. ... we can join in the affirmation that the 'then-who-is-now' historical Jesus is also the 'now-who-was-then' cosmic one.¹⁰⁹

In summary, Chenchiah's interpretation of Holy Spirit as universalised Jesus, Holy Spirit as creative energy, Jesus as *mahāśakti*, a new emergence in history, Jesus as *adi purusha* of new creation and his emphasis on the cosmic significance of Christ (but without

¹⁰⁹ Sathianathan Clarke, 'The Jesus of Nineteenth Century Indian Christian Theology', <<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?Title-1122>> [accessed 11 May 2003].

undermining the historical Jesus) and Abhishiktānanda's theology of God's presence, *advaitic* oneness between the Father and the Son, non-duality of the Spirit, and Trinity as mutual communion – all these along with the contributions of Spirit Christologists might serve as helpful insights for seeking the contours of Spirit Christology for the Indian context.

5.5 A Precursor to Part Three

In this section, we shall concentrate on pneumatology, particularly on the theme 'the indwelling of the Spirit.' Since we will be concentrating more on the indwelling of the Spirit in the next part of our study, we shall do this as a precursor to Part Three. We have discussed pneumatological anthropology, the epistemic character of the Spirit and spirituality in Chapter Three. Here we shall elaborate on these themes drawing from scripture, tradition, Spirit Christologists, Indian thinkers and other contemporary theologians of the Spirit.

5.6 Pneumatology

5.6.1 The Indwelling of the Spirit: Pneumatological Anthropology

The Spirit, the Indweller, is the idea predominant in Abhishiktānanda's theology. We have shown that Hook and Lampe speak of the indwelling Spirit and this idea is not alien to biblical thought. In Ex 29:45–46, the liberator of Israel is one who dwells among the people. This theme recurs again in the prophets and in the priestly writings.¹¹⁰ In the Targums the term *Shekinah* is used to express the immanence of God who indwells his

¹¹⁰ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol 2, p. 80, referring to Ezek 37: 26-27; Joel 2:27; Hag 2:4-5; Zech 2:10-12; Lev 26:11-12.

people.¹¹¹ In the New Testament, in various passages, this idea of God's indwelling presence occurs.¹¹²

We have shown in the Third Chapter that for the Spirit Christologists the relationship between the human spirit and the divine Spirit is one of interpersonal communion.

Kärkkäinen explains that by human spirit we mean "that aspect of a man or a woman through which God most immediately encounters him or her (Rom 8:16; Gal 6:18; Phil 4:23; Heb 4:12) that dimension wherein one is most immediately open to God (Matt 5:3; Luke 1:47; Rom 1:9; I Pet 3:4),"¹¹³ although one cannot be very sure in several passages of the New Testament whether the term spirit refers to the human spirit or the divine Spirit.¹¹⁴

Abhishiktānanda comments on Paul's use of the term *pneuma* for both human and divine.

Paul shows a disconcerting freedom in his use of the term *pneuma*. ... Paul's intuition boldly soars up to the Real, caring all too little for the fine distinctions of the intellect. At the deepest level of man's spirit is found the Spirit of God by which man's spirit is quickened (Rom 8:14). At the deepest level of man's interiority there is the interiority of God, his Spirit, the spirit which introduces man into the very depths of God (I Cor 2:10). In fact, the Spirit alone can sound and reveal the abyss of Being, for it is in him that the cycle of Being, that is, of God's complete self-manifestation in his own mystery comes to its term.¹¹⁵

In Congar's view, Paul uses the term indwelling in the sense of "entering into a definitive relationship of covenant with God and of enjoying communion with him on the one hand and, on the other, of being in a state in which one is the true temple in which God dwells and where he is given spiritual worship."¹¹⁶ Robinson says, "If we may use the term

¹¹¹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol 2, p. 79.

¹¹² Jn 14:16-17, 23, 26; 15: 10, 26 Gal 4:6; I Cor 3:16; I Cor 6:19; 2 Cor 1:22; 3:2, 3; Rom 5:5; 2:29; 8:9, 11, 27; Eph 3:17; 2 Thess 3:5; I Jn 4: 12-13; I Jn 4:16.

¹¹³ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 28.

¹¹⁴ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 28, referring to Mark 14:38; Rom 8:15; 11:8; I Cor 4:21; etc.

¹¹⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 96.

¹¹⁶ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol 2, p. 80.

'spirit' to denote our human self-consciousness, the first thing we may say about it is that spirit operates as a unifying centre."¹¹⁷

Further, Robinson points out that the term *ruach* originally meant desert wind, which carries an element of mystery and power.¹¹⁸ The term wind refers to upward thrust and to power that is beyond the human, which can be called supernatural.¹¹⁹ "It does exhibit the real inclusion of one life within another, ... in which man loses himself to find himself, and his life is 'hid with Christ in God.'"¹²⁰ Yet the Spirit is distinctly other to the human personality. The divine Spirit is a personality higher than our own and includes our own without destroying the "content of our self-consciousness."¹²¹ As we have pointed out in the third chapter, "The human life of Jesus of Nazareth shows us how a human personality may be integrated into the divine, whilst retaining its own individuality and characteristics. In this, He is for faith the first-born among many brethren."¹²² So, Jesus Christ cannot be understood in individualistic terms, but only in the *perichoretic* relationship.¹²³

This is explained by Abhishiktānanda within the *advaitic* framework. Jesus was one with the Father or he found his 'I' in the 'I' of the Father. This is the place of ultimate encounter, the meeting of divine Spirit with the human spirit in the inner depth of one's being.

For Jesus, God is truly 'an Other', another *I* distinct from his own *I*. Jesus addresses God as 'You', and God also speaks to him in the second person. With this *You*, this *Other*, Jesus has continual communion and communication. But the

¹¹⁷ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 68.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

¹²¹ Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 276.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Thomas A. Smail, 'In the Image of the Triune God', *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 5 no. 1 (2003), 22-32, (p. 25).

relationship is a particularly profound and mysterious one. No words can adequately describe it or fully express its richness.¹²⁴

There is no place for division, confusion and separation between the two. There is no *dvaita* but *advaita*. This is seen in Jesus' prayer too. His prayer is "enfolded in the unique *Thou...*"¹²⁵ God is "not-one an-eka and also not-two, a-dvaita."¹²⁶ This is the meeting of *ātman* and Brahman. It is not an equivalence of *ātman* and Brahman but the human self is truly the human self and the divine self is truly the divine self, a non-duality transcends oneness. Abhishiktānanda's interpretation of *advaita* rescues the concept of the *ātman* – Brahman relationship from a monistic understanding. He claims, "the Upaniṣadic equivalence is not between God and man, but between *atman*, the Self, as revealed in the ultimate experience of self-awareness and Brahman, the mystery of the Absolute in itself."¹²⁷

The biblical understanding of the indwelling of the Spirit as interpersonal communion can positively interact in general with the Upaniṣadic thinking of Brahman, who is the light that shines within the human self. The Upaniṣadic understanding could gain much from interacting with the concept of the Spirit of God as solidarity and communion that Abhishiktānanda and the Spirit Christologists point out. Michael Welker points out that the characteristic of the Spirit of God is a self-giving nature and self with-drawal, even selflessness. The Spirit is a turning to others.¹²⁸ The Spirit "makes present the self-withdrawing and self-giving Crucified One"¹²⁹ and it is by "turning to Christ and others,

¹²⁴ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 79.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-127.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

¹²⁷ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 66.

¹²⁸ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 138, citing Michael Welker's *God the Spirit* trans. John F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), pp. 280-83.

¹²⁹ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 138.

the Spirit creates solidarity and communion.”¹³⁰ In Abhishiktānanda’s view, the Spirit is the perfect communion that adds *koinonia* to essential *ekatvam*. One’s own ‘I’ is discovered in the ‘I’ of the others.

Further, for Abhishiktānanda the fact that the Holy Spirit indwells us means that the whole Trinity indwells us. This is also affirmed by some of the Spirit Christologists. If we take the standpoint we took in the previous chapters, that the Spirit refers to the whole Godhead and the Spirit is also a distinct *hypostasis* then we have to affirm here that the whole Trinity indwells a person.

In Congar’s view, God encounters himself in the interiority of the human self.

God *himself* is present as a gift and he dwells in our innermost depths—‘intimior intimo meo’, ‘more inward and more secret than my deepest and innermost self.’ This means that the heart of the believer is, to the extent that the Spirit dwells in it, a place where God encounters himself and where there is consequently an inexpressible relationship between the divine Persons. It is really the desire or longing of God himself interceding for the saints at a deeper level than their own expressed or expressible prayer. Jesus himself, after all, said: ‘O righteous Father...that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them’ (Jn 17:26).¹³¹

Similarly Thomas Smail points out the comments of Heribert Mühlen on John 14:23. The whole Trinity makes its home within a person:

Those who love me will keep my word and my Father will love them *and we will come to them and make our home with them.* Here again is the same first person plural that we found in Genesis 1, but here it has an almost explicitly trinitarian understanding of God to give it substance. It is the God who is the ‘We’ of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in their unity and their distinctness in whose image we are made and in whose image we are to be remade.¹³²

¹³⁰ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 138, citing Michael Welker *God the Spirit*, p. 308.

¹³¹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol 2, p. 117.

¹³² Smail, ‘In the Image of the Triune God’, p. 25, citing Heribert Mühlen, *Der Heilige Geist als Person*, (Münster: Verlag Aschendorf, 1963).

Again, the Eastern doctrine of *perichoresis* is suggestive here. It sees persons of the Trinity indwelling one another. They are consubstantial and they are “inside one another.” So, when we say the Holy Spirit indwells, we in fact mean the whole Trinity indwells a person.¹³³ God indwelling us means a mutual communion between God and ourselves. Moltmann says, “In the charismatic experience of the Spirit, we experience the reciprocal perichoresis of God and ourselves. ... In the Holy Spirit, the eternal God participates in our transitory life, and we participate in the eternal life of God. This reciprocal community is an immense, outflowing source of energy.”¹³⁴ Abhishiktānanda is in agreement with such an understanding of the indwelling of the Spirit for he says, in the innermost depth of man, “God contemplates himself eternally.”¹³⁵ Smail comments that Jesus in his humanity is *imago Trinitatis*. This is the clue to our own ontology.¹³⁶

Furthermore, speaking about the Spirit, Moltmann says that the Spirit acquires the Trinitarian personhood. “The nature of the Holy Spirit is perceived only in his relationships to the other persons of the Trinity, who are ‘of like nature,’ His trinitarian inter-subjectivity illuminates his subjectivity, because his subjectivity is constituted by his inter-subjectivity. In his Trinitarian inter-personhood he is person, in that as person he stands over against the other persons, and as person acts on them.”¹³⁷ This is explained by Abhishiktānanda as the *advaita* of the Spirit. The Spirit and the Son are in each other rather than opposed to or stand over against each other. Likewise, when he speaks about the Trinity he says, “...In the mystery of God, at the very heart of Being, the Son and the

¹³³ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol 2, p. 85.

¹³⁴ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 196.

¹³⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 121.

¹³⁶ Smail, ‘In the Image of the Triune God’, p. 25.

¹³⁷ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, pp. 289-290.

Spirit proceed from the Father, alike in the non-duality (advaita) of nature and in the threefold communion (koinonia) of Persons.”¹³⁸

Two points stand out in the foregoing discussion. The indwelling of the Spirit in Jesus makes Jesus *imago Trinitatis* and the Spirit's personhood is also a Trinitarian personhood.

5.6.2 The Indwelling Spirit: Epistemological Role of the Spirit

In our Third Chapter, we made the point that the Spirit is an epistemological principle and an ontological reality. The Spirit is the indweller and also the link between God and human beings. The Upaniṣadic tradition, as we have discussed earlier, speaks of an awareness of the divine in the deepest level of one's consciousness. The Upaniṣadic way of knowing God is from inside.¹³⁹ Knowing Brahman is like a lightning flash within.¹⁴⁰

The desire to know God presupposes certain knowledge about God and therefore becomes a way of knowing.¹⁴¹ Knowledge about God is not something intellectually constructed but rather it is received and experienced. It is knowing through one's own inner self. This is *antar-yātrā*. Hindu pilgrimages to different sacred places are the symbolic act of this *antar-yātrā*.¹⁴²

Therefore, knowing God does not rely on objective observation but on subjective experience. The *antaḥkaraṇa*, the instrument of inner experience, provides reliable

¹³⁸ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda: A Christian Approach to Advaitic Experience*, pp. 103-4.

¹³⁹ Speaking about Indian psychology in general, Cornelissen says that the main thrust of Indian psychology is the science of inner being or consciousness. It takes consciousness as the basis of knowing. The ineffable reality (*anantaguna*) is known by one's self. Further, she writes, “A central aspect of the Indian system is that it recognises as consciousness not only the human mind, which is the only form of consciousness that traditional science recognises, but an exclusive hierarchy of different types of consciousness ranging right from the super-consciousness of Brahman to the apparent unconsciousness of matter. In this vast scheme, the ordinary human mind is seen as not more than an intermediary term.” Cornelissen, 'Introducing Indian Psychology: The Basics'.

¹⁴⁰ Bede Griffiths, 'Return to the Centre', <http://www.bede-griffiths.com/sangha/san_6.htm> [accessed 03 Nov 2004].

¹⁴¹ John B. Chethimattam, *Consciousness and Reality: An Indian Approach to Metaphysics* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1971), p. 133.

¹⁴² Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 65.

evidence. This is a self-authenticating experience which needs no further proof. It is even said that an objective inner silence is reliable evidence of the knowledge of Brahman. By an objective inner silence is meant unbiased inner silence. It is a particular combination of concentration and detachment leading to an attentive inner silence.¹⁴³ This subjective experience can be called intuition or sudden illumination or enlightenment. But this subjective experience does not discard reason; rather, it enhances reason. In the Upaniṣadic tradition ontology, epistemology and metaphysics are deeply interconnected. In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad Yajñavalkya instructs his wife, Maitreyī, saying that Brahman, the Self alone, should be seen, heard, thought and pondered upon.¹⁴⁴ Brahman is the unseen Seer, unheard Hearer, the unthought Thinker, the understood Understander.¹⁴⁵

Following the Upaniṣadic pattern of thinking, Abhishiktānanda says that, in the most secret centre of one's being, "the only means of illumination is the purest awareness of the self; and this self-awareness is in fact nothing else than the reflection, the mirror, of the unique 'I AM', the very Name of Yahweh."¹⁴⁶ Here, God and human beings do not become one, yet they are not two. It is not ontological oneness yet it is in the divine 'I' that the human 'I' finds its ontological status and existence. Knowing is this 'deep awareness.' This is an awareness that the ineffable mystery that is deep within yet transcends one's being. It is beyond all concepts. That is why "the eastern sage does not feel the necessity of naming

¹⁴³ Cornelissen, 'Introducing Indian Psychology: The Basics'.

¹⁴⁴ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.4.5.

¹⁴⁵ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.8.11.

¹⁴⁶ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, pp. 94-95.

the mystery that is experienced deep within one self.”¹⁴⁷ According to Vandana Mataji, *Brahma Vidyā* and the Kingdom of Heaven are one and the same thing.¹⁴⁸

John Moffitt, analysing the Upaniṣadic way of knowing, claims, “in Christian terms, the voice of intuitive wisdom bears witness to God’s dwelling in the depths of the human soul, where he is to be known. It tells a man to know God as the foundation of his own existence.”¹⁴⁹ Avery Dulles speaks about five models of revelation namely, revelation as doctrine, revelation as history, revelation as inner experience, revelation as dialectical presence and revelation as new awareness.¹⁵⁰ We can see some parallels between the Upaniṣadic way of knowing and Dulles’ model of revelation as inner experience, which is a direct divine communication to the human soul that is open to God.

Further, knowing God within is not uncommon in the thought of the early church theologians. In the view of Didymus the Blind (c.313–98 CE) the Holy Spirit “will teach not like those who have acquired an art or knowledge by study and industry, but as being the very art, doctrine and knowledge itself.”¹⁵¹ Augustine spoke about holy restlessness.

¹⁴⁷ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, pp. 94-95.

¹⁴⁸ She refers to Kaṭha Upaniṣad 4.1.2; Matt 6:6, Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.12; Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.2.2; Jn 15:4; 14:23; Chāndogya Upaniṣad 8.1.1; Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.3.12; Subala Upaniṣad 7; Jn 1:11, 1:26, 14:17; Chāndogya Upaniṣad 8.6.5; Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.1.13; Maitri Upaniṣad 6.27; Chāndogya Upaniṣad 3.14.3; Kaṭha Upaniṣad 4.12; 2.6.7; Jn 1:3; 14:23; Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.1.1; Iśā Upaniṣad 6; Chāndogya Upaniṣad 1.1.10; 2.8; Praśna Upaniṣad 5.7. K. P. Aleaz, *Dimensions of Indian Religion: Study, Experience and Interaction* (Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1995), pp. 131-132, citing Vandana, ‘Reflection of a Christian on the Upaniṣads’, in D. S. Amalorpavadass ed., *Research Seminar on Non-Biblical Scriptures* (Bangalore: NBCLC, 1974), pp. 237-259.

¹⁴⁹ John Moffitt, *Journey to Gorakhpur: Reflections on Hindu Spirituality* (London: Sheldon Press, 1973), p. 31. G. S. Hendry makes the same point. He says, “Man’s creaturely dependence on God is inherent in the structure of his being.” George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (London: SCM, 1957), p. 107.

¹⁵⁰ J. Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (Gujarat, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2001), p. 238, citing Avery Dulles, *Models of Revelation*, 2nd edn (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1992), p. 121.

¹⁵¹ Kilian McDonnell, ‘A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?’ *Theological Studies*, 46 (1985), 191-227, (pp. 223-224), citing *On the Holy Spirit* 1,2 (PG 23,130).

Our hearts remain restless until they rest in God.¹⁵² We perceive God in our inner self. Augustine's exhortation, "Do not go abroad. Return within yourself. Truth dwells in the inner man. And if you find that your nature is mutable, transcend yourself...Therefore, head for the place where the very light of reason is kindled,"¹⁵³ Meister Eckhart's confession that 'God is nearer to me than I am to myself' and Thomas Aquinas' reference to intimate presence of God in humans come close to the Upaniṣadic understanding of God.¹⁵⁴ Like Augustine and Eckhart many other Christian mystics experienced God within.¹⁵⁵ They characterise a kind of infinite passion for God. They find fulfilment only in God.¹⁵⁶ It is mutual knowing between God and the soul. This is often known as "the soul's 'mystical bridal' with God."¹⁵⁷

We can also say that Upaniṣadic epistemology shares common ground with the Orthodox tradition of the East. In the Eastern tradition, the understanding is that God is beyond all conceptualization. The knowledge of God is experiential in the most personal sense. The knowledge of God brings about communion with God.¹⁵⁸ Basil speaks about the pneumatological roots of the knowledge of God. The work of the Holy Spirit is interior, it is knowledge from within, the Spirit produces illumination and one discovers God within.¹⁵⁹ According to Palamas, the knowledge of God is union with God. The apophatic

¹⁵² Barbara Finan, 'The Holy Spirit: An Issue in Theology', *Spirituality Today*, 38 (1986), 9-18, (p. 9).

¹⁵³ Vladimir Lossky, 'Elements of "Negative Theology" in the Thought of St. Augustine', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 21 no. 2 (1977), 67-75, (p. 74), citing *De vera religione*, I, 39; PL 34: 154.

¹⁵⁴ Chethimattam, *Consciousness and Reality*, p. 176.

¹⁵⁵ Bernard of Clairvaux speaks of a spiritual ladder leading up to God in progression from love of neighbour to love of God. Bonaventure spoke about the mind's journey to God. Teresa of Avila reaches to the castle of the soul through seven steps. Meister Eckhart speaks about an inward road. Thomas Merton speaks of the spirituality of soul. It is in the innermost chamber that the soul perceives God and God perceives himself. Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, pp. 91-93. Also Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, p. 81.

¹⁵⁶ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, pp. 198-199.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁵⁸ Gerry Russo, 'Rahner and Palamas: A Unity of Grace', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 32 no. 2 (1998), 157-180, (p. 172).

¹⁵⁹ Boris Bobrinsky, 'The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ: "Pneumatic Christology" in the Cappadocian Fathers', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 28 no. 1 (1984), 49-65, (p. 56), referring to Basil *On the Holy Spirit*, XVIII.47; XXVI. 61.

way of knowing leads to union with God.¹⁶⁰ It is not possible “either to know God or to express any positive idea of him, the deepest knowledge of him being purely experiential or mystical.”¹⁶¹

Many contemporary theologians speak along the same lines. For example according to James Dunn the Spirit is “essentially an experiential concept.”¹⁶² Moule points out that in the New Testament, for example in I Cor 2: 9-16, the term *pneuma* is used in reference both to God and to human beings. This indicates the affinity between the divine and human. Moreover, it also suggests that revelation comes to human beings through the Spirit.¹⁶³ Thus, the Spirit stands for both the transcendence of God and God’s immanent accessibility to human beings. Further, Moule points out Paul’s emphasis on the “innate capacity”¹⁶⁴ of humans to receive God. In G. S. Hendry’s view, “... the Spirit is God knowing himself, and to receive the Spirit is to participate in that knowledge.”¹⁶⁵ Kilian McDonnell says that the Spirit is both experience and a way of knowing.¹⁶⁶ “The Spirit known (object) is discovered by the Spirit knowing (subject).”¹⁶⁷ In other words, “God is object, but only because He is seen with His own seeing.”¹⁶⁸

Pneumatology plays the epistemological role in theology since no one understands God except through the Spirit. Knowing God by the Spirit within is non-objective, rather than

¹⁶⁰ Russo, 'Rahner and Palamas: A Unity of Grace', p. 173.

¹⁶¹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, p. 62.

¹⁶² Kilian McDonnell, 'Theological Presuppositions in Our Preaching about the Spirit', *Theological Studies*, 59 (1998), 219-235, (p. 232). Also James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SCM Press, 1975), p. 201.

¹⁶³ C. F. D. Moule, *The Holy Spirit* (London: Continuum, 2000), pp. 8-9. See also Wisdom of Solomon 9:16f., and Judith 8:14.

¹⁶⁴ Moule, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 16, referring to Rom 8: 5-11; I Cor 15: 44-58.

¹⁶⁵ Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 34.

¹⁶⁶ McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' pp. 222-223, referring to I Jn 3.24; 4.13.

¹⁶⁷ McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' pp. 216-217.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

a subjective experience.¹⁶⁹ The Holy Spirit within, as a hidden persuader or the divine immanence in human, respects and enhances human personality.¹⁷⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar speaks of the Spirit as non-objective. The Spirit is breath and he breathes through us.¹⁷¹ According to Heribert Mühlen, the Spirit is “the mediated mediation who mediates all to all, but who himself needs no further mediation.”¹⁷²

These views highlight the point that Abhishiktānanda attempts to show, that is, the relation between God and humans is *advaita*. It is neither God alone nor creatures alone, nor it is God plus creatures, but rather it is a unity that is beyond all separation, which cannot be explained by even a chaste and disciplined rationalism.

India, at least in her seers, allows herself no respite until she has unravelled its ultimate secret, the very mystery of Brahman, as she calls it. India pursues this mystery into the deepest level of man’s consciousness. There she finds both the source and the consummation of all that is, and attains to the complete satisfaction of every wish, the perfect peace and final bliss which is her heart’s desire. Yet at the very moment of this discovery all forms disappear, worship is muted into silence, all praise and all petition are seemingly transcended, all bhakti and all karma apparently come to an end.¹⁷³

This kind of knowing or epistemology has implications for Christological articulation.

5.6.3 Spirit Christology and Christological Language

We have said earlier that Spirit Christology shows that Word/*Logos* cannot capture everything about God, that there is an apophatic/Spirit dimension to theological language and that this leads us on to other modes of experiencing and articulating God, including

¹⁶⁹ McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' p. 217.

¹⁷⁰ H. Cunliffe-Jones, 'Two Questions Concerning the Holy Spirit', *Theology*, LXXV no. 624 (1972), 283-298, (p. 295).

¹⁷¹ McDonnell, 'Theological Presuppositions in Our Preaching about the Spirit', p. 222. Also Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Explorations in Theology, 3: Creator Spirit* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993), pp. 111-12.

¹⁷² McDonnell, 'Theological Presuppositions in Our Preaching about the Spirit', p. 222, citing Heribert Mühlen, “Das Christusereignis als Tat des Heiligen Geistes,” *Mysterium Salutis* (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1969) 3/2.514.

¹⁷³ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 54.

silence. Both Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda suggest that speech about God or the way we articulate the meaning of Christ depends upon our epistemology. Chenchiah emphasises experience as the way of knowing or the direct contact with Jesus.¹⁷⁴ Abhishiktānanda attempts to show, as mentioned above, that non-dual intuition cannot be adequately captured in rational concepts. In his own experiences, he went beyond rationality in emphasising the cave of the heart as the authentic selfhood. He taught that going deep within oneself transcends all *nama* and *rupa*.

Doctrines, laws and rituals are only of value as signposts, which point the way to what is beyond them. One day in the depth of his spirit, man cannot fail to hear the sound of the *I am* uttered by He—who-is. He will behold the shining of the Light whose only source is itself, is himself, is the unique Self... What place is then left for ideas, obligations, or acts of worship, of any kind whatever?¹⁷⁵

Nevertheless, this does not mean we abandon all rational inquiry. Abhishiktānanda's own experience propelled him to harmonise conceptual formulations with revelation of the mystery in his inmost self.

5.6.4 Spirituality

Intuition of the Self is the basis of Upaniṣadic spirituality. "Religion is a matter of personal realization."¹⁷⁶ It is the "pursuit of Self within the self" in the deepest centre of consciousness.¹⁷⁷ In Panikkar's view, the Hindu doctrine of the non-duality of the self and the absolute points to the "immanent spirituality of the Spirit."¹⁷⁸ This resonates with

¹⁷⁴ Chenchiah, 'Review and Restatement on Marcus Ward's Book on the Theological Task in India,' *The Guardian*, 1947, as reprinted in D. A. Thangasamy, *The Theology of Chenchiah, with Selections from His Writings* (Bangalore: CISRS, 1966), 70-77, (72-73).

¹⁷⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 47.

¹⁷⁶ S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 316.

¹⁷⁷ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 34.

¹⁷⁸ Ewert Cousins, 'The Trinity and World Religions', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 7 no. 3 (1970), 476-498, (p. 480), citing Raymond Panikkar, "Toward an Ecumenical Theandric Spirituality," *Journal of Ecumenical studies*, V, 1968, 507-34.

Moltmann's description of the divine Spirit as the "immanent transcendence."¹⁷⁹

Following Wis 1:7 that says 'God's Spirit fills the world and he who holds all things together knows every sound,' Moltmann affirms that it is possible to experience God "in, with and beneath each everyday experience of the world."¹⁸⁰ For Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda Jesus is a model, a prototype of such spirituality in his *abba* experience. "To call God 'Abba' is an equivalent in Semitic terms of advaita, the fundamental experience."¹⁸¹ The sacred ceaseless invocation of *abba* of Jesus is heard within every heart for "Reality is hidden in the cave of the heart (nihito guhāyām)."¹⁸²

For Congar, Jesus' *abba* experience reveals his "unique consciousness."¹⁸³ In Indian thinking, it is the immediate awareness of God. In Orthodox spirituality, "immediacy and mediation of the divine presence are not mutually exclusive but often occur together. When a saint intercedes, he or she is personally present to us, and Christ is also personally present to us in and with the saint. Such mediation produces more love, coinherence and communion among persons not less."¹⁸⁴ All these approaches endorse the charismatic, mystical spirituality of realising God within and the "cosmic depth" without. One who knows the communication of the Spirit in the innermost centre of the heart¹⁸⁵ strives towards only one thing that is the supreme joy of the Ultimate.¹⁸⁶

¹⁷⁹ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 47.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹⁸¹ James Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda: His Life Told through His Letters*, 1989, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), p. 283.

¹⁸² Stuart, *Swami Abhishiktānanda*, p. 295.

¹⁸³ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 2, p. 105, referring to J. Jeremias, *The Prayers of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1967). See also Wong, 'The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus', (pp. 65-66). J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SCM, 1975), 15-21. J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (London: SCM, 1971), 61-68.

¹⁸⁴ Verna Harrison, 'The Fatherhood of God in Orthodox Theology', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37 no. 2-3 (1993), 185-212, (p. 193).

¹⁸⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 99.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15, n. 11.

'When there is the earth to lie down on, why worry with a bed?
Is not the palm of the hand worth any vessel?
To clothe oneself is not the air sufficient?
Or, if need be, a rag picked up on the roadside?' citing *śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 2, 2.

5.7 Conclusion

The above discussions on pneumatological anthropology, epistemology and spirituality once again suggest that Indian Spirit Christology can very well find its basis in the interior approach to reality. The knowledge of Self (*brahmavidyā* or *ātmavidyā*) cannot be attained by means of words and concepts.¹⁸⁷ It is heard within. The *advaitic* experience takes place at a deeper level of consciousness and goes beyond the limitations of words, concepts, space and time. It reveals what humanity is at its deepest and leads to a deeper understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Chethimattam defends the interior approach in theology since “consciousness is the focal point in the Indian and Oriental approaches to reality.”¹⁸⁸ So he thinks that theology “should start from the interior experience of the spirit”¹⁸⁹ Likewise, Pope John Paul II emphasised that “the starting point of theology should be ‘the centre of the human consciousness’...”¹⁹⁰ In his ‘Sunday Angelus’ message on 29 September 1996 he said,

Today’s prevailing scientific culture puts an enormous quantity of information at our disposal; but everyday it is apparent that this is not enough for an authentic process of humanisation. We have greater need than ever to rediscover the dimensions of the ‘heart’.¹⁹¹

‘Let him endure wicked words and insult nobody;
let him bless when cursed,
let him have neither house nor hearth,
and go from house to house in quest of his food,
indifferent and resolute, silent and recollected...
With the self as lone companion let him roam the world,
Straining towards supreme joy!’ citing *Manusmriti* 96, 97.

¹⁸⁷ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, pp. 27-28.

¹⁸⁸ Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology*, p. 72.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

He remarked that Eastern spirituality in general “makes a specific contribution to authentic knowledge of man by insisting on this perspective of the ‘heart.’”¹⁹²

In the next part of our study, thinking along these lines, we shall probe further into Hindu patterns of thinking and some helpful ways of presenting Christ to Indian Christians and Hindu neighbours.

¹⁹² Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology*, p. 2, citing L' Osservatore Romano, Weekly edition in English, No.40 (1460, 2 October 1996) p.1.

Part Three

Chapter Six

Understanding Jesus Christ in India: Spirit Christology

6.1 Introduction

A child asks his mother, 'Where have I come from?' The mother answers,

Half crying, half laughing, and clasping the baby to her breast, 'You were hidden in my heart as its desire, my darling. You were in the dolls of my childhood's games; and when with clay I made the image of my god every morning. I made and remade you then. You were enshrined with our household deity, in his worship I worshipped you.'¹

As D'Costa says, the mother's reply in this quote indicates something of our own exercise of interpreting Christ in India. It is a task of bringing out the hidden aspects of Christ from the religious and cultural traditions of India similar to Michelangelo's hidden David in the block of marble. "The gospel is, of course, not identified with cultures but is identified in cultures. It cannot exist apart from a cultural expression"² and "the Holy Spirit is the divine imagination in cultures."³

As we have shown in previous chapters, the Spirit defies reduction to some set categories.⁴

We have also argued for the mutuality between pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology. Christocentrism and pneumatology are not set in mutual opposition in Spirit Christology but rather they are inseparable aspects of one divine

¹ Gavin D'Costa, *Sexing the Trinity: Gender, Culture and the Divine* (London: SCM, 2000), p. 193, citing R. Tagore, from the Collection, *The Crescent Moon*, entitled 'The Beginning', Collected Poems.

² A. M. Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology* (Bangalore, India: Dharmaram Publications, 1998), p. 228.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 240. Here culture indicates "the entire complex of cognition, beliefs, arts, morality, laws, customs, or any other capacity or habits acquired by man as a member of society" and religion is part of culture. Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology*, p. 225. According to Volker Küster, there is a dialectical relationship between culture and religion. Culture and religion interpenetrate each other. They are reciprocal, mutually related. Volker Küster, *The Many Faces of Jesus Christ* (London: SCM, 2001), p. 4.

⁴ Likewise, in Rayan's view, the Spirit is freedom, beyond human calculation, leads us into ever-new surprises, dreams and into the unknown. Samuel Rayan, *Breath of Fire* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1979), p. 12.

economy.⁵ As we said earlier, within one divine economy of salvation, there is a creative and constructive tension between the centrality of the Christ-event and the universal activity of the Spirit. This gives us a certain openness and autonomy when speaking about the Spirit's role in the cosmos and yet the Spirit is bound to Christ. The Spirit is "the power of what is eschatologically new" and the Spirit's "function is therefore constantly to render Jesus Christ present in all his newness."⁶ Robinson argues that the relation between Christ and the Spirit are so intimate that "the activity of Spirit takes new forms."⁷ Kasper writes, "Jesus Christ is one of those figures with whom you are never finished once you have begun to explore his personality."⁸ One revelation takes place in ever-new forms in each context according to need and aspiration. The Spirit's role in Christology is both continuing Christ's mission and complementing his mission.⁹

The Spirit is at work in every religion, culture, scripture¹⁰ and each brings its own unique gifts to the global theology.

Religions are generally known as the religions of the Spirit. Even if certain religions do not make any explicit mention of the Spirit, they do speak about the need of a new awareness, a transformed consciousness in man. This consciousness is a spiritual consciousness, something different from man's average, every day awareness.¹¹

⁵ J. Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (Gujarat, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2001), p. 197. For a similar view see Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster Press, 2003).

⁶ Walter Kasper, *Jesus the Christ* (London: Burns & Oates, 1976), p. 256.

⁷ H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit* (Great Britain, Digsweil Place: James Nisbet, 1958), p. 121.

⁸ Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 9.

⁹ George Stuart Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (London: SCM, 1957), p. 26. Also, Anne Primavesi and Jennifer Henderson, 'The Witness of the Holy Spirit', *The Ecumenical Review*, 41 no. 3 (1989), 426-435, (p. 426).

¹⁰ See Jose Kuttanimattathil, 'The Holy Spirit and World Religions: The Meaning of God's Revelation. I', *Vidyajoyti Journal of Theological Reflection*, 63 (1999), 255-266.

¹¹ Francis Vineeth, 'Pneuma and Charisma in the Indian Church', *Jeevadhara*, xii no. 70 (1982), 202-277, (p. 262).

If this is so then, as Kilian McDonnell says, “The spirit is the universal comprehensive horizon within which any and all theological reflection is possible.”¹² According to Pope John Paul II, the Spirit is “at the very source of humanity’s existential and religious questioning.”¹³

Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda have worked to show that Hinduism can contribute to our understanding of Christ, the church can receive spiritual goods from other traditions¹⁴ and an “authentic faith lies at the base of the Scriptures of other dharmas.”¹⁵ They attempt to go beyond Graeco–Roman categories to the language and thought–form of another culture. Both of them realise that the unequivocal formulation of Nicaea, that Christ is *homoousios* with the Father, can be expressed differently in different cultures without losing the essential insight of this formulation. Nevertheless, it is not a mere re–translation, it is more than that, for it brings new aspects that are so far unnoticed or ignored.

Abhishiktānanda and Chenchiah have pointed out to us that the Hindu interioristic approach to reality leads us on to explore a pneumatological perspective on Christology. They draw terminologies from the wealth of Hindu religious tradition to understand the Spirit. Chenchiah uses terms like *antaryāmin* and *śakti*. He was much influenced by Aurobindo but misses the theme of *ānanda*, which is central to Aurobindo’s philosophy.¹⁶ Abhishiktānanda uses terms like *ānanda* and *ātman*. Although they offer us clues as to how to interpret Christ from the vantage point of the Spirit, they have not set out

¹² Kilian McDonnell, ‘A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?’ *Theological Studies*, 46 (1985), 191–227, (p. 216).

¹³ Kuttianimattathil, ‘The Holy Spirit and World Religions the Meaning of God’s Revelation. I’, p. 260, citing the Pope’s Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Missio*, no. 28.

¹⁴ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point: Within the Cave of the Heart*, 1969, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), p. 37.

¹⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *The Further Shore*, 1975, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), p. 66.

¹⁶ Nalini Devdas, *Ānanda: The Concept of Bliss in the Upaniṣads* (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1974), p. 37.

specifically a Spirit Christology. In this chapter, we shall go further in the direction set by Abhishiktānanda and Chenchiah and also bearing in mind the major contributions of Spirit Christologists that we have highlighted in the previous chapters, attempt to develop an Indian Spirit Christology.

Ours is a Christology from below. We begin from the humanity of Jesus. We shall consider the Hindu terms used by Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda for the Spirit such as *ātman*, *antaryāmin*, *śakti* and *ānanda* as the best resources for Christological reflection. We do not intend to equate these terms with the Christian understanding of the Holy Spirit or to say that they are equivalents of the Holy Spirit. Using these terms, we only attempt to see correspondences to the Holy Spirit. Consideration of each of these terms will challenge and enhance our understanding of Christ since we believe that the Spirit guides us to discern valuable insights in Hinduism. It is in the Spirit that such reflection is possible¹⁷ and we “use the Spirit to understand the Spirit.”¹⁸

The Indian religious tradition, by being plural, offers different possibilities to interpret Christ. There are many strands of philosophical systems and cultural variations. Ours is one attempt to interpret Christ from the perspective of Hindu understanding of the Spirit since we feel the need to develop, or at least point out, the contours of Indian Spirit Christology. Although we take the Upaniṣads as our main source, we shall also draw resources from other Hindu traditions. In the first section, we shall attempt to interpret the person of Christ using the concepts, *ātman*, *antaryāmin*, *śakti* and *ānanda*. Our goal is to make Christ relevant to Indian Christians and to Hindus who may wish to see Jesus through Hindu eyes. In the second section, using the same concepts, we shall point out

¹⁷ Kilian McDonnell, 'Theological Presuppositions in Our Preaching about the Spirit', *Theological Studies*, 59 (1998), 219-235, (p. 222).

¹⁸ McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' p. 216.

that Spirit Christology has the potential not only to provide common ground between Christianity and Hinduism but also can address common threats such as human conflicts on different fronts, sex and caste discrimination, poverty, ecological degradation and so on. Therefore, Christianity and Hinduism can work in cooperation in the common quest for the divine and for fullness of life. While we think that it is an effort to seek a relevant Christology for India, we also believe that India can contribute to a global theology.

6.2 Interpretation of the Person of Christ

6.2.1 *Ātman*

We have mentioned already that the *Brahman-Ātman* concept is the discovery of the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣadic tradition is a reaction to an overemphasis on ritualism in religion. Instead of an external religion of rituals and sacrifices, it emphasises the intuitive and experiential knowledge of Brahman.¹⁹ Thus, it introduced a new worldview in Indian religious thinking. Augustine Thottakara explains,

The new trend of thought marked a shift from the external sacrificial ritualism of the Brahmanas to a search for internal knowledge of one Supreme Reality of the Upaniṣads, from *karma-kanda* to *jnana-kanda*, from Brahmanism to a kind of Sramanism, from a polytheistic idea of godhead to a monotheistic or monistic concept of the absolute ultimate Being. Man who was the sacrificer (*yajamana*) in the Brahmanic period, becomes the seeker of knowledge of Brahman (*brhama-jijnasu*) in the Upaniṣads.²⁰

In the Upaniṣads, the term *Ātman* is used to designate the Self, the Ultimate Reality that is Brahman.²¹ The root word '*an*' (*aniti*), from which the term *Ātman* comes, means 'to breathe, 'to enliven,' 'to vivify.' Therefore, the meaning of *Ātman* is "breath, life, life-

¹⁹ Augustine Thottakara, 'Antaryamin: The Inner Spirit', *Journal of Dharma*, xxiii no. 3 (1998), 341-359, (p. 341). Similarly, Nalini Devdas explains that Upaniṣadic religion is "free from the ritualism, mythology and many gods of early Vedic literature and later Puranas." Devdas, *Ānanda*, p. 22.

²⁰ Thottakara, 'Antaryamin: The Inner Spirit', p. 341.

²¹ Vineeth, 'Pneuma and Charisma in the Indian Church', p. 263.

principle, spirit, the vivifier.”²² There is also another opinion that the word *Ātman* comes from the root word ‘at’ (*atati*) which means “to go, to walk, to wander.”²³ This indicates movement, the wind or the moving Spirit. Hence, the Brahman, the *Paramātmān* or the Supreme Spirit is understood as the moving Spirit.

It is worth noticing that the Hebrew word ‘*ruach*,’ the Greek *pneuma* and the Latin *spiritus* have similar meanings. They refer to ‘breath’, ‘wind’, ‘movement of air’, ‘God’s energy’, ‘God’s strength, power and dynamic activity’. The Spirit is wind-like energy. It refers to the creative and dynamic activity of God.²⁴ Phrases such as the Spirit of the Lord, the wind of the Lord, the breath of the Lord refer to God’s activity both at the physical and at the spiritual level. The *ruach* of the Lord inspired the prophets, charismatic leaders and artisans. The *ruach* of God was active in liberating the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage. The *ruach* is life-giving breath. It is the source of life.²⁵ It is “God’s own power of creation, and the power of life, which is communicated, to all created things, in heaven and on earth.”²⁶ The Spirit is the creative and vital energy of all that lives.²⁷

Ātman is also the term used to designate the human self, soul, spirit, and individual self.²⁸

It indicates “that which makes an individual to be himself, that is, the principle of his essential personal identity.”²⁹ The term *ātman* is “the self – grammatically reflexive

²² Thottakara, ‘Antaryamin: The Inner Spirit’, p. 342.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Alasdair I. C. Heron, *The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit in the Bible in the History of Christian Thought and in Recent Theology* (London: Marshall Morgan & Scott, 1983), pp. 3-4. For a detailed discussion on the meaning of the Spirit in the Old Testament see Friedrich Baumgärtel, “Spirit in the Old Testament,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, VI (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977) pp. 359-367.

²⁵ Refer to Gen 1:2; 6:17; 7:15; Gen 45:27; Judg 15:19; Ps 104:29; Ps 33:6; Job 33:4; 27:3; Isa 42:5; Ezek 37:5ff.

²⁶ J. Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1990), p. 92.

²⁷ Jean Laporte, ‘The Holy Spirit, Source of Life and Activity According to the Early Church’, in *Charismatic Renewal*, ed. by Edward D. O’Connor (London: SPCK, 1978), 57-99, (p. 57).

²⁸ Thottakara, ‘Antaryamin: The Inner Spirit’, p. 342. Also, Heron, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 6.

²⁹ Abhishiktānanda, *The Further Shore*, p. 102.

personal pronoun; it is the principle which constitutes the reality of the person, his awareness of himself.”³⁰ In other words, the *ātman* or human spirit signifies “the most intimate core of the conscious being at a level beyond the reach of sense or mind.”³¹ It refers to the interiority of human self and it is the central point of all reality. Similarly, in Vedic understanding the word *Ātman* means “breath or vital essence from which develops the meaning of soul or self.”³² Also, the term *prāna* refers primarily to “the source of life within, and then to its diffused appearance throughout all the organs of body and mind, which are called *pranah*, or ‘vital breaths’, in the plural.”³³

Here again it is worth noticing that the Hebrew term *ruach* also denotes “the vital principle in man, his whole psychical life, though usually regarded on its higher side, as the religious origin of the usage would suggest.”³⁴ *Ruach* is what gives life and personality and it is “what makes a creature a recognizable human being...”³⁵ The term *pneuma* like the Hebrew *nephesh* is synonymous with the human soul or self or person.³⁶ In Upaniṣadic thought *ātman* as real self is distinguished from the empirical self. The *ātman* as real self

³⁰ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 61.

³¹ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda: A Christian Approach to Advaitic Experience*, 1974, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 1997), pp. 95-96.

³² R. H. S. Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India* (Madras: The Christian Literature Society, 1977), p. 239, citing Rg Veda x. 16.3.

³³ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 95.

³⁴ Wheeler Robinson, 1962, pp. 20-21. We have discussed sufficiently about the relationship between divine Spirit and human in the 3rd and in the 5th chapters. For some more discussion on connection between the *ruach* of God and the *ruach* of human beings, see R. Birch Hoyle, 'Spirit (Holy), Spirit of God', in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921), 784-803, (pp. 784-786). Hans Hübner observes that the Biblical writers often used the terms *ruach* and *pneuma* with different shades of meaning. They used it to refer to “the centre of will and of action in human beings, that which is ‘inmost’ as making the whole of existence what it is.” Hans Hübner, 'The Holy Spirit in Holy Scripture', *The Ecumenical Review*, 41 no. 3 (1989), 324-338, (p. 325). Therefore he comments, if the term ‘spirit’ refers to both human beings and the divine there is a possibility of speaking of “an analogy between statements of God and statements of human beings in the Scripture.” Hübner, 'The Holy Spirit in Holy Scripture', p. 326.

³⁵ Alwyn Marriage, *Life-Giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God* (London: SPCK, 1989), p. 31. Marriage points out that the ancient Chinese concept of ‘Chi’ like *ruach* means more than breath. “When one takes part in the contemplative dance, the Tai Chi Chuan, one is learning to control and use one’s breath, but along with that goes control and use of one’s whole emotional and spiritual potential.” Marriage, *Life-Giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God*, p. 32.

³⁶ C. F. D. Moule, *The Holy Spirit* (London: Continuum, 2000), p. 16.

is “the source of the three major elements of spiritual experience, namely the sense of the real, the presence of awareness, and the extension of freedom. It is the unity of being, truth and freedom.”³⁷ The empirical self is the sum of one’s “customary roles, habits, aspirations, values, ideas, ideals, attitudes and sentiments, which are the deposits of his culture, and those biogenic traits which are reinforced by the mutable and the accidental.”³⁸

The Upaniṣads give central place to *ātman* as the real self and speak about the correspondence between *ātman* as the interiority of human self and the divine Self, Brahman. In the Upaniṣadic understanding, Brahman the transcendent Self indwells the heart of human beings as *ātman*. Chāndogya Upaniṣad says,

The intelligent whose body is spirit, whose form is light, whose thoughts are true, whose nature is like ether, omni-present and invisible, from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed; he who embraces all this, who never speaks, and is never surprised, he is my self within the heart, smaller than a corn of rice, smaller than a corn of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a canary seed or the kernel of a canary seed. He also is my self within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than the heaven, greater than all these worlds. He from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and taste proceed, who embraces all this, who never speaks and who is never surprised, he, my self (atman) within the heart, is that Brahman.³⁹

This understanding of the Spirit is analogous to the Christian belief that God dwells within us.⁴⁰ Abhishiktānanda points out that in the Indian context “God’s ‘Spirit’ would best be

³⁷ Henry Winthrop, ‘Indian Thought and Humanist Psychology: Contrasts and Parallels between East and West’, *Philosophy East and West*, 13 no. 2 (1963), 137-154, (p. 147).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 3.14.2-4. The Upaniṣadic references are from Hume, Robert Ernest, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads Translated from the Sanskrit*, 2nd rev. edn (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985).

⁴⁰ Wainwright gives an example from the Orthodox Church. He describes the spiritual experience of Nicholas Motovilov, one of the spiritual children of St. Seraphim of Sarov. Motovilov asks the Father Seraphim how one could be sure of ‘being in the Spirit of God.’ The conversation between them takes place as follows:

“Then Father Seraphim took me firmly by the shoulders and said: ‘My Son, we are both at this moment in the Spirit of God. Why don’t you look at me?’

‘I cannot look, father,’ I replied, ‘because your eyes are flashing like lightning. Your face has become brighter than the sun, and it hurts my eyes to look at you.’

Don’t be afraid,’ he said. ‘At this very moment you yourself have become as bright as I am. You yourself are now in the fullness of the Spirit of God; otherwise you would not be able to see me as you do.’

understood as meaning his *ātman*, his Self, since he is the deepest centre, the very 'inwardness', of the divine mystery."⁴¹ Hence, one's encounter with the Spirit is an encounter with God's interiority at the deepest level of one's self. It is the meeting of the Spirit with the spirit. "In this depth of the soul, where the depth of God and the depth of the soul are but one and the same depth."⁴² Similarly, Thomas Weinandy says "... because of the Spirit dwelling within us, we are assumed into the very depths of God's inner being – the mystery of God himself."⁴³ In Upaniṣadic terms, as Abhishiktānanda interprets, this is the communion between *ātman* and Brahman where *ātman* the human self is not absorbed in the divine Self.

Now, speaking about Christ, we have said that Nicaea and Chalcedon, while emphasising the divinity of Christ, undermined the historicity or humanity of Christ. Therefore, our task is to interpret Jesus' oneness with God without diminishing his humanity using the resources provided by the Upaniṣads. If we begin from Jesus as a person (as the Spirit Christologists suggest) and use the *ātman* centred view of the Upaniṣads, then it can be said that Christ had *ātman*, interiority of human self, and that he realised the divine Self in his human self. We find the divine within the human Jesus. Jesus' incarnation is the

Then bending his head towards me, he whispered softly in my ear: 'Thank the Lord God for his infinite goodness towards us...But why, my son, do you not look me in the eye? Just look, and don't be afraid; the Lord is with us.'

After these words, I glanced at his face, and there came over me an even greater reverent awe. Imagine in the center of the sun, in the dazzling light of its midday rays, the face of a man talking to you. You see the movement of his lips and the changing expression of his eyes, you hear his voice, you feel someone holding your shoulders; yet you do not see his hands, you do not even see yourself or his body, but only a blinding light spreading far around for several yards and lighting up with its brilliance the snow-blanket which covers the forest glade and the snow-flakes which continue to fall unceasingly...

What do you feel?' Father Seraphim asked me.

'An immeasurable well-being,' I replied. Geoffrey Wainwright, 'The True, the Good, and the Beautiful: The Other Story', *Journal of Theology of Southern Africa*, 107 no. 1 (2000), 23-36, (pp. 31-32).

Wainwright states that Motovilou characterises that feeling of well-being "as peace and joy, which the good *starets* interprets as the peace of Jesus which the world cannot give (John 14:27; Phil 4:7) and the unutterable joy with which the Holy Spirit fills whatever he touches (I Peter 1:8; I Thess. 1:6)." Wainwright, 'The True, the Good, and the Beautiful: The Other Story', p. 32.

⁴¹ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 95.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Thomas G. Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), p. 34.

revelation of deep interior communion between human and divine. It is a state of oneness or unity that is beyond dualistic categories. It is non-dual or *a-dvaita*, a kind of non-duality that transcends all separation. It is not a kind of monism but a unity-in-distinction. J. Dupuis says that Jesus' statement 'I and my Father are one' implies "reciprocal immanence."⁴⁴ He says that Jesus' words express the "awareness of a distinction in unity, the experience of an interpersonal relationship whose two poles (distinction and oneness) are inseparable constituents: Jesus is not the Father, but he is one with him."⁴⁵

Abhishiktānanda says, "Only in and through Christ can the isolation of the *atman-Brahman* unfold into communion, so that the solitary *aham* opens up to the *tvam*, the *Thou* of mutual yet undivided love."⁴⁶ At baptism Jesus realised that he was "the very 'I AM' of Yahweh."⁴⁷ In the interiority of his spirit he realised that the voice that is calling him 'Son' and in the Spirit he replies 'Abba.' This *abba* experience is in the language of the Upaniṣads *Tat tvam asi* (Thou art that).⁴⁸ Hence, as we mentioned already the *māhavākyas* of Upaniṣads such as *Aham brahmāsmi* and *tattvamasi* point to Christ's experience of oneness with God that transcends duality. Unlike *advaitic* monism, Christ's union with God can be said to be mutual interpenetration or mutual indwelling. In Panikkar's view, this is the meaning of *ātman*. *Ātman* is a person in relation to the other not merely an

⁴⁴ J. Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, p. 270.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 272. We might say that this idea is similar to Martin Buber's I-Thou and Ebner's *Zwischen mensch* – the 'in-between' person. Jesus had an awareness of himself in relation to the Father. Jesus found his 'I' in his experience of Thou. There is no I without a Thou. Both are intertwined yet not without losing each one's individuality. Jesus is a kind of in-between person if we use Ebner's phrase. "The in-between is the dual, that which overcomes the 'Thou-lessness' (Ebner) of the I." Raimon Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, trans. by Annemarie S. Kidder (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), p. 49.

⁴⁶ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 88.

⁴⁷ Odette Baumer-Despeigne, 'The Lord's Prayer as a Way of Initiation, Texts from Dom Henri Le Saux', in *Swami Abhishiktānanda: The Man and his Message*, ed. by Vandana, 1986, reprint edn (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), 35-51, (p. 48).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

individual self.⁴⁹ “For one’s reflecting on self, for being oneself, *aham*, the Thou without which there is no I, is needed.”⁵⁰

Atman Christology reinforces the point that we made earlier in our discussion of Spirit Christologies. We have shown that all the approaches of Spirit Christology interpret the meaning of Christ’s existence in terms of the activity of the Spirit of God. It is a blending of spirit with spirit or mingling of spirits with no replacement of human natural powers with divine powers or, to use C. F. D. Moule’s expression, the Spirit impinges on spirit.⁵¹ Robinson says that it is the “kinship of spirit and Spirit.”⁵² We have also discussed Coffey’s reinterpretation of *enhypostasia* as the idea of divine presence in the human Jesus. In Jesus, God is supremely present. In him dwells the fullness of God. Colossians 2:9 presents Jesus as the one in whom ‘the whole fullness of the godhead dwells bodily.’ Boyd explains that in Christ “the totality of God’s ‘godness’ is to be found.” This means Christ is the “complete being of the Godhead”, or in Jesus, the fullness (*pleroma*) of God dwells embodied.⁵³

Likewise, the doctrine of *communicatio idiomatum*, which was convenient to safeguard the impassibility of God, can also be re-interpreted. The doctrine of *communicatio idiomatum* offers us the insight that a mutual interchange of properties is possible between the finite and the infinite.⁵⁴ The finite and infinite are not incompatible or diametrically opposite.

⁴⁹ Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, pp. 54-55.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁵¹ Moule, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 17.

⁵² Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, p. 121.

⁵³ Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India*, p. 125. C. F. D. Moule points out that according to G. B. Caird, *Paul’s Letters from Prison*, (Oxford: University Press, 1976), p. 191 and E. Schweizer *Der Brief an die Kolosser*, (Zurich: Benziger Verlag, 1976), p. 108, this verse suggests that God himself is present in Christ. Moule, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 55.

⁵⁴ We have seen that the doctrine of the impassibility of God holds that the Perfect God never changes. If Christ was God then how could he suffer and die? So it was solved that Christ suffered and died in his human nature but not in his divine nature. Through the interchange of properties, the attributes of one nature

Applying the same logic to Christ's human relationship with the divine, we can say that the finite man Jesus fully participated in the divine.

At this point, it is also worth noticing that some of the early Church theologians such as Cyril of Alexandria and Maximus use the idea of *perichoresis* to explain the union of divine and human natures in Christ.⁵⁵ In Maximus' view, the human nature in Christ gives room to the divine nature. In Maximus', as well as in Cyril of Alexandria's, view *perichoresis* is achieved by the divine nature not by human nature. Human nature simply gives room to divine nature. Although the concept *perichoresis* is very helpful in explaining the unity of two natures in Christ, yet the concept is used again to undermine the human nature in Christ.⁵⁶

But we can use the concept of *perichoresis* to explain the intimate communion between God and the person of Jesus, to explain Jesus' statement 'My Father in me' and 'I in my Father.'⁵⁷ The Father is entirely in Jesus and Jesus is entirely in the Father. This indicates relationality and communion. The limitation of Apollinarian Christology is that the divine replaces the human or, as Kasper explains, "God and man mutually delimit one another

is predicated to the other. Therefore, it is proper to say that the Son of God died. Jean Laporte in his study of early Church theologians shows that Tertullian could counterbalance this sharp distinction. In Tertullian's doctrine of *communicatio idiomatum* "by a transfer of functions, the Spirit carries out things usually done by the Flesh, and the Flesh is performing things possible only to the Spirit." Laporte, 'The Holy Spirit, Source of Life and Activity According to the Early Church', p. 74.

⁵⁵ For a detailed discussion on this see Verna Harrison, 'Perichoresis in the Greek Fathers', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 35 no. 1 (1991), 53-65.

⁵⁶ Michael G. Lawler, 'Perichoresis: New Theological Wine in an Old Theological Wineskin', *Horizons*, 22 no. 1 (1995), 49-66, (pp. 50-51).

⁵⁷ Jn 10:38; 14:10. Joseph Ratzinger (the Pope Benedict XVI now) shows that Augustine uses *perichoresis* to signify the *perichoresis* of divine persons rather than the *perichoresis* of two natures in Christ. Augustine citing Jesus' statement 'My teaching is not mine but his who sent me' (Jn 17:16) says that this paradox of "my and not mine indicate the personal interior relationship between Jesus and the Father. The simultaneous my and not-mine without ceasing to be mine imply the perichoresis of Jesus and the Father." Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, trans. by J. R. Foster (New York: Herder & Herder, 1970), pp. 136-137, citing Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel According to St John*, vol.10 in Marcus Dods, ed., *The Works of Aurelius Augustine* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1873), p. 404.

and in effect are mutually exclusive.”⁵⁸ Whereas, the concept of *perichoresis* enables us to think of the infinite and finite in relation to each other and not as mutually exclusive. The human Jesus and God the Father make room for each other and interweave with each other.

Similarly, the Hindu logic of reconciling opposites has no difficulty in accepting the paradoxes such as fully God and fully man. Divine and human are not two irreconcilable elements. Fully God and fully man are not opposite to each other but include and enhance each other. For example, the utterance of the sacred word in the Vedic rituals connected the divine and the human since they are said to have innate powers. Julius Lipner says, “Its vibrations resonated to the depths of human and divine reality, and attuned the human to the divine.”⁵⁹ This explains how divine and human are mutually connected.

Tantrism⁶⁰ also can contribute to explaining the liminality of Christ. For example, the Tantric twilight language (*Sandhya-bhāshā* or *Sandhā-bhāshā*) is used to express the “paradoxical situation” of the *yogin*’s state of consciousness.⁶¹ Tantric art reveals static structures as well as vibrational patterns, expansion as well as contraction.⁶² The Tantric *yantra* reveals the unity of paradoxical elements. *Yantra* means ‘aid’ or ‘tool.’ The image of the deity is drawn on paper or engraved on metal to aid meditation.⁶³ “The primal abstract shapes, such as the point, line, circle, triangle, square, are harmonized in

⁵⁸ Kasper, *Jesus the Christ*, pp. 211-212.

⁵⁹ Julius Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 33.

⁶⁰ The word *tantra* comes from the root word *tan-* which means to expand, thus focusing on the expansion of a person’s consciousness and faculties. Tantrism is a system of thought that provides a synthesis between inner reality and the world outside, between spirit and matter and enables a human being to achieve “fullest spiritual and material potential.” Ajit Mookerjee and Madhu Khanna, *The Tantric Way: Art, Science, Ritual* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), p. 9.

⁶¹ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 32.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

composition to provide a formal equilibrium which is both static and dynamic.”⁶⁴ As in the *yantra, maṇḍala* signifies “wholeness and totality.”⁶⁵ *Maṇḍala* means circle and within its perimeter different patterns are drawn or painted to aid meditation. They are “visual metaphysics.”⁶⁶ Besides illustrating that paradoxical elements can coexist in harmony, they also demonstrate a further point that these visual metaphysics bring ‘liberation through sight.’ The act of seeing, which is analogous to contemplation, is in itself a liberating experience.⁶⁷ Likewise, Indian classical dance reveals an inclusion of exclusive parts. Sunil Kothari says,

In India, a close relationship has existed between the art of dance and sculpture from time immemorial. Not only do they share common aesthetic principles but also certain laws of execution to such an extent that the dance appears to be mobile sculpture and sculpture frozen dance.⁶⁸

So the *ātman-brahman* communion from the Upaniṣadic sources, a reinterpretation of *enhypostasia* and concepts such as *communicatio idiomatum, perichoresis*, insights from Vedic rituals, Tantrism and even insights from Indian classical dance indicate the same point, that divine and human can be considered in an inclusive way rather than as mutually exclusive and provide us with resources to speak about Jesus’ personhood.

6.2.2 *Antaryāmin*

The word *antaryāmin* means ‘inner controller’ or ‘indweller.’ The root word *yam* means “to restrain, to check, to hold back”, from *antar*, that is, from within.⁶⁹ Brahman is

⁶⁴ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 33.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

⁶⁸ Sunil Kothari, *Odissi: Indian Classical Dance Art* (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1990), p. 13, cited in Robert B. Siegle, ‘Mirror to Mirror: Postmodernity in South Asian Fiction’, 2002, <<http://www2.cddc.vt.edu/mtm/>> [accessed 12/04/2004].

⁶⁹ Thottakara, ‘Antaryamin: The Inner Spirit’, p. 343.

understood as both inner controller and indweller of the individual soul as well as the inner controller and indweller of the cosmos. Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 2.1.4 describes Brahman as follows:

Fire is his head; His eyes, the moon and sun; The regions of space, His ears; His voice, the revealed Vedas; Wind, His breath (*prana*); His heart, the whole world. Out of His feet, the earth. Truly, He is the Inner Soul (Atman) of all.

Īśā Upaniṣad.1 says,

Whatever exists in this entire universe, all that is pervaded by the governing spirit.

Further, the Upaniṣads speak of Brahman as *ākāśa*. Brahman is identified with the wider outer space because both *ākāśa* and Brahman share common characteristics. Thottakara describes,

The characteristics of subtlety, immensity, all-pervasiveness, incorporeality, oneness (uniqueness), eternity, etc. are common to *Akasa* and Brahman. All objects of this universe exist in the *Akasa*, it provides the matrix for all beings originate from, exist and move in and ultimately enter into the supreme Spirit, Brahman.⁷⁰

Chāndogya Upaniṣad 7.12.1-2 says,

In Space, verily, are both sun and moon, lightning, stars and fire. Through Space one calls out; through Space one hears; through Space one answers. In Space one enjoys himself; in Space one does not enjoy himself. In Space one is born; unto Space one is born. Reverence Space. He who reverences Space as Brahma—he, verily, attain spacious, gleaming, unconfined, wide-extending worlds. As far as Space goes, so far he has unlimited freedom, he who reverences Space as Brahma.

Chāndogya Upaniṣad 8.1.1 identifies *Ākāśa*, the Brahman, the Ultimate Reality with the small space, *ākāśa*, within human heart.

Now, what is here in this city of Brahma, is an abode, a small lotus-flower. Within that is a small space. What is within that, should be searched out; that assuredly, is what one should desire to understand.

Thottakara comments that

⁷⁰ Thottakara, 'Antaryamin: The Inner Spirit', p. 345.

It depicts the body of a human person as the city of God (*brahma-pura*); the palace of this capital city is the heart; within the heart there is a lotus flower, which might be considered as the inner chamber of the supreme Brahman; and within this lotus flower, there is a small space (*dahara akasa*). This small space is God himself.⁷¹

This small space within the human heart is immortal. Chāndogya Upaniṣad 8.1.5 says that the small space

Does not grow old with one's age; it is not slain with one's murder. ... In it desires are contained. That is the Soul (*Atman*), free from evil, ageless, deathless, sorrowless, hungerless, thirstless, whose desire is the Real, whose conception is the Real.

For the sake of the seeker, the Supreme Being manifests itself as innermost Self and as inner controller. But this inner space is as large as the outer space. According to Chāndogya Upaniṣad 8.1.3,

As far, verily, as this world-space (*ayam akasa*) extends, so far extends the space within the heart. Within it, indeed, are contained both heaven and earth, both fire and wind, both sun and moon, lightning and the stars, both what one possesses here and what one does not possess; everything here is contained within it.

Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad 3 Section 7, which is known as *Antaryāmi-brahmana* describes Brahman as the inner controller. The Brahman who dwells in space is the controller of space within. He is the inner controller, the immortal.

All these texts make it clear that Brahman, the Ultimate Reality who is the cause of the whole universe, who pervades the whole universe, is found in the innermost self of human beings. Meditating on God as the inner Spirit ("*dahara-vidya* or *daharakasa-vidya*") is one of the thirty-two forms of meditations or *upasanās* stated in the Upaniṣads. "The seekers of liberation are asked to meditate on God as present and active in their own inner being. God is the inner Being of all beings, and therefore they have to see in every being

⁷¹ Thottakara, 'Antaryamin: The Inner Spirit', p. 343.

God's presence."⁷² Meditating on God in one's inner *ākāśa* enables the seeker to see the same God pervading the whole universe. God is the inner controller of sentient and insentient, animate and inanimate entities.⁷³

In Rāmānuja's view, God as *antaryāmin* is not an impersonal force but a supreme person, *Purushottama*.⁷⁴ Rāmānuja uses a body-soul paradigm to explain the inner relationship between the world and Brahman. According to him, both individual selves and matter are conceived as the body of Brahman. Although individual selves and matter are independent from God they are inseparable from God. This relationship is explained as a body-soul relationship or *śarīra-śarīrī-bhāva*.⁷⁵ Rāmānuja's *Gītā-Bhāṣya* says,

In the heart of all beings who constitute My body, I am seated as their Self. To be the Self means that I am entirely their supporter, controller and master.⁷⁶

The relationship between God and the individual soul is one of identity and difference.

The difference that accompanies the identity of the individual soul with God precludes any interpretation of loss of identity or individuality by merging in God.⁷⁷

A. J. Appasamy finds the concept of *antaryāmin* useful in interpreting *Logos* Christology.

In his view, God the *antaryāmin* (indweller) is immanent in the world.⁷⁸ Following the prologue to the Gospel of John, Appasamy affirms, "the *antaryāmin* has taken flesh in Jesus, so that 'He is fully embedded in Jesus.'"⁷⁹ Christ is the immanent eternal *Logos*,

⁷² Thottakara, 'Antaryāmin: The Inner Spirit', p. 347.

⁷³ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.7.3.

⁷⁴ John B. Chethimattam, *Consciousness and Reality: An Indian Approach to Metaphysics* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1971), pp. 190-191.

⁷⁵ Thottakara, 'Antaryāmin: The Inner Spirit', p. 352.

⁷⁶ Thottakara, 'Antaryāmin: The Inner Spirit', p. 353, citing Rāmānuja, *Gītā-Bhāṣya*, x. 20.

⁷⁷ John Moffitt, *Journey to Gorakhpur: Reflections on Hindu Spirituality* (London: Sheldon Press, 1973), pp. 105-106.

⁷⁸ Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India*, p. 241.

⁷⁹ M. M. Thomas, 'Some Trends in Contemporary Indian Christian Theology', *Religion and Society*, xxiv no. 4 (1977), 4-18, (p. 15).

antaryāmin, the God who dwells within human beings and in the world. *Logos* is both personal and impersonal. According to him, God transcends personality.⁸⁰ This again is a high Christology. But we want to begin from the humanity of Christ. Using the concept *antaryāmin* we can speak about the humanity of Christ as well as his cosmic significance.

We can say that the Spirit, the cosmic indweller, dwells fully in Jesus. In the latter days of Israel's history, there was an expectation of the promised Messiah, who would be permanently filled by the Holy Spirit in contrast to the occasional fillings of the Spirit in kings, judges and the prophets.⁸¹ It is significant to note that all the approaches of Spirit Christology that we discussed see Jesus as the permanent possessor and dispenser of the Spirit. From conception to resurrection Jesus' life and ministry is by the power of the Spirit.⁸² Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of the Spirit. We have shown from our study of Spirit Christologies that the inner proximity between Spirit and Christ takes Christology beyond history and adds to Christology corporate, cosmic and eschatological dimensions. The Spirit's role in Christology enables us to affirm that Christ is human and divine, both universal and particular and Christ is personal but more than individual.

We have mentioned earlier that Indian theologians such as Chenchiah, Samartha and Sathianathan Clarke emphasise the need to speak of the cosmic significance of Jesus without undermining his historical particularities. As we have discussed earlier Chenchiah sees Christ's incarnation as a continuous creation of the New Humanity through the Holy Spirit. He interprets the Holy Spirit as the universalised Jesus. Similarly, in Vengal Chakkarai's theology the Holy Spirit is identified with the risen Christ. The Spirit of Jesus

⁸⁰ See V. P. Thomas, 'Indian Christian Approaches to the Knowledge of Christ', *Indian Journal of Theology*, 18 (1969), 88-99, (p. 91).

⁸¹ Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India*, p. 206. Similarly G. S. Hendry argues that the permanent endowment with the Spirit upon Jesus is a prominent feature in Isa. 11:2 and 42:1-4. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, pp. 17-18.

⁸² Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India*, pp. 207-208. See also, Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, p. 19.

is *antaryāmin* one who indwells the believers. Jesus incarnates again and again in the experiences of believers. “The Holy Spirit in human experience is the incarnation of Jesus Christ.”⁸³ The *antaryāmin*, the Spirit, causes Jesus’ birth, drives his life and mission, and makes Christ our contemporary. The Spirit also plays an epistemological role in making Jesus known to us. Chakkarai argues that it is from our *antaryāmin*, the indwelling Spirit, that we start our query about Jesus Christ. However, Chenchiah and Chakkarai seem to identify the risen Christ with the Spirit and thus obscure the distinction between the two.

This idea of mutuality between Christ and the Spirit can be explained using the concept of *antaryāmin* along *a-dvaitic* thinking. Christ and the Spirit mutually indwell each other. The *antaryāmin* (Spirit) indwells Christ and makes Christ cosmic. Jesus acquires cosmic significance without losing his historical significance and at the same time, the Spirit’s mission is to reproduce Christ in ever–new ways. This enables us to think about the Spirit and Christ in relational terms. Christological pneumatology points to pneumatological Christology and pneumatological Christology points to Christological pneumatology.

Drawing from Tantrism, this interpretation of the mutuality between Christ and the Spirit can also be shown as the interdependence of sound and form. In Tantrism, sound and form are interdependent. For example, repeating mantras forms a significant part in Tantric rites and rituals. “Each letter of the mantra is charged with energy and creates vibrations in the inner consciousness. Sound vibrations are said to be the manifestation of the *Śakti* and consequently are sound equivalents of the deities.”⁸⁴ This shows a close relationship between sound and form. “Sound and form are interdependent, and every form is a

⁸³ V. Chakkarai, *Jesus the Avatar* (Madras: Christian Literature Society for India, 1926), p. 121.

⁸⁴ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, pp. 32-33.

vibration of a certain density; conversely, every sound has a visual equivalent. Sound is the reflex of form and form is the product of sound.”⁸⁵

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the mutuality and reciprocity between Christ and the Spirit has implications for the doctrine of Trinity. As Kilian McDonnell says, “the mutuality and reciprocity are at the very core of the mystery.”⁸⁶ Starting from the humanity of Jesus, we are able to approach the inner life of God. We perceive God, as a “dynamic structured relationality in whom there is an infinite possibility of life.”⁸⁷ The communion between the Spirit and Jesus makes the Trinitarian movement circular and rhythmic. We go beyond the Western and Eastern tendencies of subjugating the Spirit to the Son and subjugating the Son and the Spirit to the Father respectively. The linear movement disappears and, along with it, the hierarchy within the Trinity. Each person constitutes the other person. “Each are in each, and all in each, and each in all, and all in all, and all are one.”⁸⁸ In Elizabeth Johnson’s view,

The perichoretic dance, the triple helix twirls around in a never-ending series of moves ... the circular dynamism within God spirals inward, outward, forward toward the coming of a world into existence, not out of necessity but out of the free exuberance of overflowing friendship. Spun off and included as a partner in the divine dance of life, the world for all its brokenness and evil is destined to reflect the triune reality, and already does embody it in those sacramental anticipatory moments of friendship, healing, and justice breaking through.⁸⁹

In Hindu tradition, the image of Śiva Nataraja, which means Śiva the king of cosmic dance, symbolises the cosmic activities of divine. He dances within the halo of flame.

⁸⁵ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 33.

⁸⁶ McDonnell, 'A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?' p. 213.

⁸⁷ Daniel W. Hardy, “The Spirit of God in Creation and Reconciliation,” in Hilary D. Regan and Alan J. Torrance with Antony Wood, ed., *Christ and Context: The Confrontation between Gospel and Culture*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), pp. 237-258, p. 251.

⁸⁸ Elizabeth A. Johnson, 'Trinity: To Let the Symbol Sing Again', *Theology Today*, 54 no. 3 (1997), 298-311, (p. 309).

⁸⁹ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), pp. 221-222.

The arch represents nature, *Prakriti*, the processes of the Universe and the transcendental Light sustaining it. Siva dancing within and touching the arch with head, hands, and feet is the universal omnipresent Spirit – *Purusha*. In one ear he wears a female earring, and in the other a male one; signifying that He represents both the masculine and the feminine energy in the Cosmos.⁹⁰

Śiva is

Four-armed, with one hand bearing the flame of wisdom in its palm, another the small double-faced drum of creative sound, a third displaying the *abhaya-mudrā* or gesture counselling not to fear, and the fourth pointing to an upraised foot inviting all to take refuge in the lotus feet which have trampled the snares of this world.⁹¹

Kim Nataraja brings out the essential significance of Śiva's dance.

First is the image of His Rhythmic Play as the course of all movement within the Cosmos which is represented by the arch, secondly, the purpose of his Dance is to release the countless souls of men from the snare of illusion; thirdly, The Place of the Dance, Chidambaram, the Centre of the Universe is 'within the Heart.'⁹²

Thus, the image of dancing Śiva embodies cosmology, theology and the way of salvation in a single form. In addition, both masculine and feminine dimensions, matter and spirit, creation and redemption are brought together in one single form. Further, both the *perichoretic* dance and the dancing Śiva indicate God as relationships, dance, flow, rhythm and dynamic movement of life.

6.2.3 Śakti

The word *Śakti* has various meanings in Hinduism. *Śakti* means force, activity, energy, the all pervasive, all-encompassing, omnipresent power of the divinity inherent in and manifested in the creation.⁹³ *Śakti* is also symbolised as the female dynamic and creative principle of the male deity. Brahma's Śarasvati, Viṣṇu's Lakshmi and Śiva's Pārvatī or Durgā or Kālī represent such female principles. Chethimattam observes that the co-

⁹⁰ Kim Nataraja, 'The Dancing Siva', <http://www.bedegriffiths.com/sangha/san_2.htm> [accessed 03 Nov 2004].

⁹¹ Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, p. 284.

⁹² Nataraja, 'The Dancing Siva'.

⁹³ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 101, n. 3.

existence of feminine creative principle that is identical with the Supreme God and responsible for creating the world, is an ingenious way of explaining the co-existence of the Absolute and perfect reality with the transitory world.⁹⁴

In the concept *Śiva-Śakti*, *Śakti* is female aspect of *Śiva*, the male deity. *Śakti* can also mean the embodiment of power, the power possessed by a deity to create the world, without its being identified as a female aspect or consort. It signifies divine power (*devatma śakti*)⁹⁵ to create the world.⁹⁶ Lipner explains that according to Brhartṛhari, the fifth century Indian grammarian and a philosopher of language, “the highest form of being is the soundless Word which is imbued with the power (*śakti*) to burst forth (*sphuṭ*) into creative expression.”⁹⁷ The significant point for us here is that *Śakti* is feminine creative power, which is an inseparable part of the Godhead.⁹⁸

Not only in the act of creation but also by sustaining and protecting creation, feminine power played a part. We can also observe a relationship between *Śakti* and goddess worship. The Goddess is seen as the feminine expression of divine. She represents “life force and the processes of birth, death, and rebirth.”⁹⁹ She takes many forms, images, associations and colours. A number of fertility goddesses are worshipped in India. For example, the goddess Sakambhari who was worshipped from about 400 to 1000 CE, was associated with vegetative fertility. She was thought to have power to ward off droughts.

⁹⁴ Chethimattam, *Consciousness and Reality*, p. 25.

⁹⁵ *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 1.3.

⁹⁶ *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 4.1.

⁹⁷ Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, p. 49.

⁹⁸ In Wisdom tradition, Sophia, the Wisdom woman is the spouse of God in creating the world (see Prov 8:22-31). Also, it is worth noticing at this point, that theologians are exploring the relationship between femininity and the Holy Spirit. Paul W. Newman points out, “The *ruach* of God was said to hover over the waters in creation like the living and powerful hovering of a mother eagle over her infants in the nest” Paul W. Newman, *A Spirit Christology: Recovering the Biblical Paradigm of Christian Faith* (Lanham, New York: University Press of America, 1987), p. 71. The hovering, bringing life to birth, sheltering and tender, compassionate protecting aspects of the Holy Spirit in the Genesis account of Creation reveal feminine attributes in God, and rescues us from perceiving God as an all-male Trinity without any need for female contribution. Marriage, *Life-Giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God*, p. 58.

⁹⁹ Catherina, 'Feminism and Spirituality', *Spirituality Today*, 40 no. 3 (1988), 220-236, (pp. 220-221).

The goddess takes care of the people. She says: 'Then until the rains come, I will provide the gods and the whole world with nourishing vegetables produced from my own body.'¹⁰⁰

In R̥g Veda, Śakti is the embodiment of power and the upholder of the universe. Also in the Vedic concept Aditi is seen as the infinite maternal principle, the visible form of the infinite.

Aditi is the heaven, Aditi is mid-air, Aditi is the Mother and the Sire and the Son. Aditi is all gods, Aditi five-classed men, Aditi all that hath been born and shall be born.¹⁰¹

The primacy of the female principle is also seen in Tantrism.¹⁰² Tantrism is a system of "the rediscovery of the mystery of woman."¹⁰³ It gives high status to women. In this system, "Śakti is endowed with all aspects of life, creative to dissolutive, sensual to sublime, benign to horrific. Śakti's universal power is the prime mover and mother-womb of the recurring cycles of the universe, and as such reflects the procreative powers of eternal substance."¹⁰⁴ Śakti, as the infinite feminine aspect of the divine and as the feminine creative and sustaining principle, enriches the idea of God.

Following the above discussion, we can say that Christ was indwelt by Śakti, the indwelling feminine creative principle. Indwelling or being indwelt by the other is itself a feminine way of explaining the relationship between the Spirit and Christ.¹⁰⁵ The Spirit

¹⁰⁰ Devi Mahātmya section of the Mārkaṇḍeya-Purāṇa (91:43-44), cited by M. K. Dhavalikar, 'Environment: Its Influence on History and Culture in Western India', *Indica*, 33 no. 2 (1996), 81-118, (p. 116).

¹⁰¹ R̥g Veda, I, 89,10, cited in John B. Chethimattam, *Patterns of Indian Thought* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1971), p. 15.

¹⁰² Tantric ritual symbols in the form of Mother and fertility cults are found in the Indus Valley Civilization. There is a close likeness between Tantric rites and Vedic practices. Also, the influence of Upaniṣads, the Epics and the Purāṇas can be traced in Tantrism. Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 10.

¹⁰³ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 16. See also Moffitt, *Journey to Gorakhpur*, p. 111. Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, p. 103.

¹⁰⁴ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 16.

¹⁰⁵ Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 234. She says "to be so structured that you have room inside yourself for another to dwell is quintessentially a female experience. To have another actually living and moving and having being in yourself is likewise the province of women."

and Christ are not understood in dualistic categories but in an inclusive way as 'we' and 'us.' They indwell in each other.

Similarly, in Jewish understanding, the *Shekinah* refers to God who dwells within. The *Shekinah* "signifies divine presence and activity in female form."¹⁰⁶ Weinandy says "the power of the Most High (*dunamis hupsistou*), that is, the Holy Spirit of Yahweh (the Father), will overshadow (*episkiasei*) Mary" must be seen in light of Exodus 40:34-5 "the glory of the Lord (the shekinah) filled the tabernacle in the form of a cloud."¹⁰⁷ The *Shekinah* is divine indwelling.¹⁰⁸ That the Spirit rested on Jesus means that the *Shekinah* found its abiding dwelling place.¹⁰⁹

At this point, it is also worth mentioning the concept of Wisdom in different traditions. In the Hebrew tradition as we have shown earlier, "ruach and hokmā, Spirit and Wisdom, are so close to one another that they are actually interchangeable."¹¹⁰ R. Panikkar shows that in the Hindu tradition, "the word wisdom is etymologically related to *vidya*, *veda*, *idein*, *videre*, vision, knowledge."¹¹¹ The Greek term '*sophia*' and the Latin '*sapientia*' indicate "experience, skillfulness and taste."¹¹² Wisdom points both to "an affective, sense-related, taste-related side and to an intellectual, cognitive, scientific side."¹¹³ While incorporating both the intellectual and sensuous, Wisdom transcends both "sensuousness and

¹⁰⁶ Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 86. The term *Shekinta* (the Aramaic form of *Shekinah*) in the Targums, Talmud and Midrash means nearness and the indwelling presence of God. Marriage, *Life-Giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God*, p. 74.

¹⁰⁷ Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship*, p. 41.

¹⁰⁸ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1999), p. 47.

¹⁰⁹ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 90.

¹¹⁰ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 46, referring to Wisdom of Solomon 1:7; 12:1; 7:21ff. See also Marriage, *Life-Giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God*, pp. 69-70.

¹¹¹ Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, pp. 8-9.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

intelligibility and takes its seat in the mystical.”¹¹⁴ Therefore, Wisdom has both a mystical and an apophatic side. Wisdom has a dwelling place in the human heart. Wisdom leads to unperturbable joy, happiness and to a state of blessedness, which is the goal of human life.¹¹⁵ Wisdom is beautiful and more precious than the pearls.¹¹⁶ Wisdom cannot be sought after as if it were an object. We can only prepare a dwelling place for her. It is a woman’s way. It is to allow oneself to be “penetrated, enlightened and inhabited by Wisdom.”¹¹⁷

Further, Panikkar shows that Wisdom and Truth are related to each other. The word *Satyam* can be used for both Truth and Wisdom. Wisdom and Truth both correspond to being. Panikkar calls it “beingness (*Seiendheit*), ‘the sum total of all being in each being.’”¹¹⁸ Being and inhabiting are etymologically connected. Wisdom inhabits, for that is the way of Wisdom. Panikkar points out that very similar to incarnation (John 1.14) Wisdom pitches her tent in the human heart, in society and in this earth.

The R̥g Veda and the Upaniṣads emphasise the same point.

By carefully pondering within their hearts, the sages found the connection between being and non-being¹¹⁹

Truth (wisdom) is understood with the heart; because, certainly, truth (wisdom) makes its home (has its basis, roots) in the heart.¹²⁰

In the Upaniṣads, Truth (Wisdom) indwells the cosmic space as well as small space in the heart.

¹¹⁴ Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, p. 3.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹¹⁶ Refer to Prov 3:15; Wisd. 7: 29-30; Job 28: 18; Prov 31:10.

¹¹⁷ Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, p. 19.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

¹¹⁹ R̥g Veda, x, 129.4, cited by Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, p. 17.

¹²⁰ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.9.23, cited by Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, p. 17.

According to Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad

The heart is truly *brahman*....The heart is its dwelling place (*āyatana*—where one enters and remains), the space (*ākāsha*), its basis (*pratishthā*) which one has to recognize in order to be stable. ...The heart is the dwelling place of all being, the basis of all being; all beings rely on the heart'¹²¹

The heart symbolizes the totality of a person. It is the centre of a person and a dwelling place of Wisdom. In semitic tradition too the heart is connected to the spirit. Panikkar shows that “the heart (hebrew *leb*; akkadian *libba*) is also connected with *ruach* (the personal human spirit), *nefesh* (soul, life), *neshamah* (breath), kidneys, and flesh.”¹²²

Using Panikkar’s analysis of Wisdom, we can conceive of Wisdom as both the mode and content of incarnation. How does one prepare for Wisdom? Panikkar explains this by using the Buddhist concept of *Shunyata*. It is not by preparation, but by simply being, that one gets ready for Wisdom. “Being quite simply means *being*; leaving being as it is, not interrupting being by means of violence, activities, thoughts; leaving being’s activities alone.”¹²³ Further, “Wisdom is free; it is a present, a pure gift. Our readiness for wisdom is an end in itself, not a means by which to acquire wisdom.”¹²⁴ It is taking a middle ground between activity and passivity, which the Bhagavadgītā teaches as detached action, action that does not look for the results of its deeds. It is “letting wisdom be what she is meant to be – whether she comes looking for us or not.”¹²⁵ So we can say that Jesus, by letting Wisdom be, by letting it penetrate him and inhabit him became the person indwelt by God. This way of explaining incarnation helps us to avoid all metaphysical debates about Christ’s two natures and their union in one person.

¹²¹ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.1.7, cited by Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, pp. 17-18.

¹²² Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, p. 18.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

Like Wisdom, *vidyā* in the Upaniṣadic thought means “the right cognition about the nature of the world, the human being and Brahman, including the relationships between them.”

Vidyā is “experiential; it has a personal, practical side to it; it must be internalised.” It involves the whole person. “The whole person must be caught up in *vidyā*: intellect, will, emotions. And from such a commitment, which entails a growing enlightenment, flows a morality which is sensitive to the distinction between virtue and vice, good and bad, requiring at all times the pursuit of the one and the rejection of the other.”¹²⁶ The way of *vidyā* is the way of wisdom. It entails purity of mind and soul. It is the better way (*śreyas*), not the path of pleasure (*preyas*). The way of *vidyā* or wisdom lead to immortality.¹²⁷ Following this, we can say that Jesus comes to us as the one who is caught up in *vidyā* (wisdom) and shows us the way of *vidyā* (wisdom).

6.2.4 *Ānanda*

*Ānanda*¹²⁸ is another beautiful concept in Hinduism. Gispert–Sauch observes that in Indian philosophical studies the concept, *ānanda*, has not gained as much attention as the other two concepts, *sat* and *cit*. This term is usually translated as bliss or joy. A mere translation of *ānanda* in English might mean bliss, happiness, joy, enjoyment. But it is an inclusive term, which suggests all forms of earthly happiness, delight and pleasure as well as the experience of the peace of liberation, and the tranquillity that transcends all temporal categories of expression.¹²⁹ Gispert–Sauch points out that the root of *ānanda*, *nand* “in general not only means ‘to rejoice’, but also ‘to be refreshed, to be strengthened, especially

¹²⁶ Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, p. 216.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Gispert–Sauch mentions that “among the older classical Upaniṣads the word *ānanda* or its derivatives are not found at all in Aitareya, Kena, Kaṭha, Iśa, and Svetāśvatara; it comes once in the Muṇḍaka; thrice in the Chāndogya and in the Praśna; 12 times in the Kauṣītaki; 27 times in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and 37 times in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad.” G. Gispert–Sauch, *Bliss in the Upanishads: An Analytical Study of the Origin and Growth of the Vedic Concept of Ananda* (New Delhi: Orientalia, 1977), p. 21.

¹²⁹ Devdas, *Ānanda*, p. 11.

by blessing or praising”¹³⁰ and that *ānanda* with the root *nand* and prefix *ā* indicates “a dynamic aspect of interiorisation and concentration” or “interior pervasion.”

The Sanskrit prefix *ā* is very often added to words of motion and suggests horizontal, quasi-mechanical, spontaneous motion; in general this is a forward movement, but it can at times also suggest a backward move (cf. *gam-ā-gam*; *dā-ā-dā*). In this dynamic meaning the prefix can often be translated by *towards*, *in* and approximates the Latin *ad* or *in* with the accusative. The particle can also have a more static connotation of the place whereto the movement has taken place and in which it now rests (cf. *ā-sthāna*, *ā-yatana*, *ā-laya*, *ā-śrama*, *ā-dhāra*). In combination with *nand* it seems to suggest a dynamic aspect of interiorization and concentration (cp. *Ā-kuñcana*, contraction; *praty-ā-hāra*, reabsorption), or perhaps even of interior pervasion (cp. *ā-kāśa*).¹³¹

6.2.4.1 Brahman is *Sat-Cit-Ānanda*

This is one of the significant religious symbols in Hindu theology. Gispert-Sauch says that the formula *sat-cit-ānanda*, *sat* (being, reality), *cit* (consciousness, thought), and *ānanda* (bliss, joy), is not found in the classical Upaniṣads. It appears for the first time in the Nṛsimhottaratāpaniyoaniṣad 1-7, in the Rāmapūrvatāpaniyopaniṣad 9.2, and in the Rāmottaratāpaniyopaniṣad 2-5.¹³²

The Ultimate Reality is indescribable, but can be indicated as *Sat* (Existence) *Cit* (Consciousness) and *Ānanda* (Bliss). Brahman is Beingness (*Sat*), Consciousness (*Cit*) and unutterable Experience (*Ānanda*). According to the Upaniṣads the reality of God can only be apprehended in a consciousness of joy that is beyond ordinary consciousness. In the Upaniṣads not only is Brahman Bliss but also the core of the human self is bliss.

¹³⁰ Gispert-Sauch, *Bliss in the Upanishads*, p. 8.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 6.

¹³² Gispert-Sauch, *Bliss in the Upanishads*, p. 1. J. Dupuis observes that these three terms do not occur together in one single text but rather are found in different texts separately. For example, Brahman is ‘supreme being’ (*satyasya satyam*) is found in Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.1.20. Brahman is ‘consciousness and bliss’ (*viññānam ānandam*) appears in Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.9.28. Brahman is ‘being, consciousness, infinity’ (*satyam jnanam anantam*) is found in Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.1. “It is the Vedanta theological tradition which on the foundation of the scriptural assertions coined the compound expression *Saccidānanda*.” J. Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, p. 274.

6.2.4.2 Bliss

Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2, Brahmānanda Vallī, 'Bliss-of Brahma Chapter explains the constitution of a person as a person consisting of food,¹³³ person consisting of breath,¹³⁴ person consisting of mind,¹³⁵ person consisting of understanding,¹³⁶ person consisting of bliss.¹³⁷ This is called the *pancha kośa* theory or theory of five sheaths namely *annamaya*, *prānamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijñānamaya* and *ānandamaya kośas*.¹³⁸ The *mayat* suffix expresses that "aspect under which" the self is considered.¹³⁹ In Gispert-Sauch's view, this is a "physico-psychological explanation of the human personality."¹⁴⁰

In R. D. Ranada's view one should not consider the five sheaths as "real 'bodies' one inside the other, ... but as 'allegorical representations of certain psychological conceptions. Man is made up of a physical body, of vital air, of mind, and intellect, and of a faculty which enables him to enjoy the ecstatic 'theoria.'"¹⁴¹

¹³³ Taittirīya Upaniṣad. 2.2.

¹³⁴ Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.3.

¹³⁵ Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.4.

¹³⁶ Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.5.

¹³⁷ Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.6.

¹³⁸ Gispert-Sauch points out that according to Maitrāyaṇiya Upaniṣad each one is the *rasa*, the essence, the flavour of the previous one: 'this food indeed is the all-supporting form of the Lord Viṣṇu. The vital breath is the essence (*rasa*) of food, the mind of the vital breath, knowledge of the mind, and bliss of knowledge.' Maitrāyaṇiya Upaniṣad 6.13, cited by Gispert-Sauch, *Bliss in the Upanishads*, p. 74. He also points out that "the Yājñiki Upaniṣad, i.e., the tenth prapāṭhaka of the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, has the same chain in a causal relation: 'From food are produced the life-breaths; from the life-breaths of beings, the mind; from the mind, knowledge; from knowledge bliss, the abode of Brahman. Indeed this five-fold personality has a five-fold self (and) in it all this is woven, the earth and the atmosphere and the sky and the directions and the intermediary regions.' Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, 10.63.1, cited by Gispert-Sauch, *Bliss in the Upanishads*, p. 74.

¹³⁹ Gispert-Sauch, *Bliss in the Upanishads*, p. 52.

¹⁴⁰ Gispert-Sauch, *Bliss in the Upanishads*, p. 73, citing R. D. Ranada, *A Constructive Survey of the Upanishadic Philosophy* (Poona, 1926), p. 143.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

According to Govindagopal Mukhopadhyaya the sheath, *ānanda* “the *ānanda*-maya is composed fully of bliss.”¹⁴² The blissful self that is beyond all consciousness dwells in the cave or the innermost core of a human being.¹⁴³ So the *rasa* or the essence of inner reality is *ānanda*.¹⁴⁴ Bliss cannot be interpreted intellectually. It can only be experienced. The Upaniṣads explain it as that of an experience of profound sleep.¹⁴⁵ The state of bliss is also explained as the experience of a man in the embrace of his beloved wife.¹⁴⁶ The experience of bliss is characterized by *abhayam* (fearlessness), *śanti* (Peace) and *pūrnām* (fullness).

Bliss is the *rasa* (essence) of all things.¹⁴⁷ One who knows that unbroken bliss fills all beings does not have fear about anything. This is an awareness that Brahman is the ground of all beings.¹⁴⁸ Fear arises from duality.¹⁴⁹ Non-duality is fearlessness and fearlessness results in supreme happiness. Fear (*bhayam*) comes from making distinction.

The experience of bliss is *śānti* (peace). Bliss is eternal peace, unpronounceable and unquenchable joy. Kena Upaniṣad describes Brahman as delight (*tadvanam*). Knowing Brahman, the delight is bliss and that is equated with inner peace. It is a state of calmness,

¹⁴² Gispert-Sauch, *Bliss in the Upanishads*, p. 73, citing G. Mukhopadhyaya, *Studies in the Upaniṣads*, Calcutta, 1960, p. 242.

¹⁴³ Gispert-Sauch, *Bliss in the Upanishads*, p. 76.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 82.

¹⁴⁵ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.1.17; Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.1.19; Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.3.9.

¹⁴⁶ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.3.21,22 says, ‘This, verily, is that form of his which is beyond desires, free from evil, without fear. As a man, when in the embrace of a beloved wife, knows nothing within or without, so this person, when in the embrace of the intelligent Soul, knows nothing within or without. Verily, that is his [true] form in which his desire is satisfied, in which the Soul is his desire, in which he is without desire and without sorrow.’

¹⁴⁷ Devdas, *Ānanda*, pp. 55-56.

¹⁴⁸ Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.9 says, ‘Wherefrom words turn back, Together with the mind, not having attained—The bliss of Brahma he who knows, Fears not from anything at all.’

¹⁴⁹ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.4.2 says, ‘He was afraid. Therefore one who is alone is afraid. This one then thought to himself: ‘Since there is nothing else than myself, of what am I afraid?’ Thereupon, verily, his fear departed, for of what should he have been afraid? Assuredly it is from a second that fear arises.’ Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.7 says, ‘For truly, when one finds fearlessness as a foundation in that which is invisible, bodiless (*an-ātmya*), undefined, non-based, then he has reached fearlessness. When, however, one makes a cavity, an interval therein, then he comes to have fear. But that indeed is the fear of one who thinks of himself as a knower.’

inner tranquillity. “*Śānti* is not a negative concept like *stirata* and *niscalata*, which indicate absence of disturbance and involvement in external multiplicity. It is a tranquillity of peace which implies rest in the supreme plenitude of *Brahman*.”¹⁵⁰ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.23¹⁵¹ says one who sees Soul in one’s own soul and Soul in everything overcomes all evil and becomes calm and peaceful. Kaṭha Upaniṣad 5.12,13 says the wise who perceive the One among many, who is the One controller of all, attain *śānti*.

The experience of bliss is *pūrnam*. *Ānandam* or *Śānta* or *Turiya* is *Pūrnam*.¹⁵² “The word *pūrṇa* comes from the root *pṛī-pūr* means to fill, to complete.”¹⁵³ It indicates completeness or fullness. *Ānandam* or Fullness is a state of completeness, non-duality, bliss, freedom, supreme knowledge, pleasure.¹⁵⁴ *Pūrnam* is equal to “Buddhist *śūnya*, the ‘essential void.’ It is the total absence of desire, either to be or to be like this or like that, could ever arise. More accurately, it is the absence of desire which characterizes *being* itself, since in its fullness it has no need of any complement whatever.”¹⁵⁵ In short, this is the immortal state. Therefore, *Brahman*, the Ultimate Reality is infinite knowledge and infinite bliss (*Vijñānam Ānandam Brahma*) and *Ānandamaya* is the final goal. Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.8 says,

Both he who is here in a person and he who is yonder in the sun—he is one. He who knows this, on departing from this world, proceeds on to that self which consists of food, proceeds on to that self which consists of breath, proceeds on to that self

¹⁵⁰ Chethimattam, *Consciousness and Reality*, p. 175.

¹⁵¹ This eternal greatness of a *Brahman* is not increased by deeds (*karman*), nor diminished. One should be familiar with it. By knowing it, One is not stained by evil action.

Therefore, having this knowledge, having become calm, subdued, quiet, patiently enduring, and collected, one sees the Soul just in the soul. One sees everything as the Soul. Evil does not overcome him; he overcomes all evil. Evil does not burn him; he burns all evil. Free from evil, free from impurity, free from doubt, he becomes a *Brahman*.

Also see Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 4.11,14; Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.13.

¹⁵² Stephen C. Thadom, ‘*Purnam: An All Inclusive Concept in the Indian World-View*’, *Jeevadhara*, xxx no. 177 (2000), 271-280, (p. 274).

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 271.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 274.

¹⁵⁵ Abhishiktānanda, *Saccidānanda*, p. 107.

which consists of mind, proceeds on to that self which consists of understanding, proceeds on to that self which consists of bliss.

Speaking about the person of Jesus Christ, Gispert–Sauch says that Jesus had all the five layers and particularly the innermost layer, bliss, to its perfection. “To attain to the Self is to attain supreme bliss.”¹⁵⁶ Jesus experienced *ānanda*, bliss, joy, in his innermost being. He was in complete possession of joy, which comes by a “perfect inner integration.”¹⁵⁷ In Jesus Christ, perfect bliss was not lost even in abandonment and suffering on the cross.¹⁵⁸ “Here is the distinction between the person of Christ and the other human beings: he possesses in its fullness that substantial bliss, and he is able to share it with all human beings by participation, a bliss however that has passed through the sorrows of this world as he accepted suffering and death, death on a cross, in solidarity and love with the human race. Therefore God has exalted him and from his bliss we all receive.”¹⁵⁹ Bliss is immortality. Jesus, by virtue of possessing this bliss, is immortal and one with God. Immortality is the ultimate goal and desire of all conscious beings. Infinite reality reveals itself as *ānanda-rupam amṛtam* – in the deathless form of joy.

This is our interpretation of the person of Jesus Christ using Hindu theological insights. At this stage, we need to ask the same questions that we have been asking in the other parts of this study: Does our Christology from below blur the distinction between Jesus and us? Does the interpretation of Christ from the vantage point of the Spirit displace Christ? Finally, how best the Indian interpretation of Spirit Christology deals with the issue of impassibility of God and is relevant to the existential struggles of the people since our task

¹⁵⁶ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 57.

¹⁵⁷ G. Gispert–Sauch, “Notes for an Indian Christology”, *vidyajoyti Journal of Theological Reflection*, 61 (1997), 757-765, (p. 758).

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 760.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 761.

is not only to relate Christology to the religio-cultural aspect but also to socio-economic aspect.

Firstly, our *Ātman*, *Antaryāmin*, *Śakti* and *Ānanda* Christologies interpret Jesus' human life as one lived in complete union with God. It points to mutual communion, indwelling that transcends all separation and affirms unity-in-distinction. In Christ, divine-human unity is revealed even as both are distinct. Christ's experience is profoundly deeper. The Holy Spirit indwelling Jesus proves, as we have discussed in the previous chapters, that Jesus is the permanent bearer of the Holy Spirit. It is in the Spirit's affiliation with Jesus that Jesus' Sonship is revealed.

Christ's *abba* experience shows that he had the awareness, the self-consciousness, that he belonged to both the human race and the sphere of divinity simultaneously. People experienced him as the one who transcended the temporal. This provides a way to speak of Christ's divinity without making Christ utterly different from us. Yet it shows the distinctiveness of Christ from us.

Secondly, the *Ātman*, *Antaryāmin*, *Śakti* and *Ānanda* Christologies show the dialectical interaction between the Spirit and Christ. They express the inclusion of one life within another. We have argued, especially in the *antaryāmin* section in conformity to the conclusion that we reached earlier in our study of different approaches of Spirit Christology, that the association of Spirit with Christ makes Christology cosmic and eschatological. Pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology complement each other. The Spirit is Christocentric and Christ is pneumatocentric. In

Christ, the *antaryāmin* is present and active and makes Christ the *antaryāmin*, the cosmic event.

Thirdly, the association of Spirit and Christ is the hermeneutical key to interpreting the work of Christ. It furnishes us with a pneumatological perspective to Christ's work and a Christological underpinning to the Spirit's role in history. The history of salvation is not yet closed. As we have argued in previous chapters, the mutuality between Christ and the Spirit thwarts any understanding of God as immutable, impassible, and gives a new understanding of time and eternity. Our understanding of the Spirit from the Upaniṣadic perspective adds more clarity to the conclusion that we reached in previous chapters with regard to the understanding of God as eternal.

The Upaniṣadic conception of Brahman as *ākāśa* enables us to take a shift from time to space. It shows that eternity can be explained in terms of space rather than in terms of time.¹⁶⁰

Vrata tradition also contributes to our understanding of time. The term *vrata* refers to the votive rites performed by women without the assistance of a male priest.¹⁶¹ Women perform ritual arts and demonstrate their religious devotion as a group. In Vrata tradition,

¹⁶⁰ This idea is not absent in Christian theologians. Speaking from the Christian tradition, Gunton sees eternity as *perichoresis*, the personal space in which Father, Son and Spirit are related to each other. Colin E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), p. 134.

¹⁶¹ In Vedic and Epic literature, the term *vrata* was linked to *ṛta* (cosmic order), *dharma* (law) and *tapas* (austerities). In Purāṇas and Nibandhas they developed into votive rites. Votive rites performed by women include bathing or ablutions, praying, fasting, taking of a vow, worship of the deity and so on. Debasish Chakrabarty, 'Vrata: Including the Excluded', <http://www.integraldesign.abk-stuttgart.de/wildenstein/lectures/BW_2002/pdf/Vrata.PDF> [accessed 09 August 2006].

we encounter a sense of time not merely as growth and progression but time as “context, place, or structure of energies.”¹⁶²

Hindu pilgrimages to sacred places and rivers rest on the idea that the deity is present in more than one place at the same time. So visiting one sacred place at a time will be equal to visiting all the places and getting the blessings of the deity. As Lipner states, “space and time converge in Hindu religious thought and practice in the context of ‘salvation.’”¹⁶³

The relationship between time and space can also be seen in Vedic sacrificial performances. “The place where the sacrificial ritual (*yajña*) was performed became (temporarily) sacred, and was sometimes referred to as the *nābhi* or navel–centre point–of the world. The time during which the *yajna* was performed became sacred time, opening the doors to immortality.”¹⁶⁴ Also the temple is considered as “a kind of *maṇḍala*, or structured pattern of sacralised space and time.”¹⁶⁵

In the Bhagavad Gītā the Lord says ‘I am time.’ Eternity is the personal existence of God in time and history. History has religious meaning for a Hindu. Samuel Rayan points out the relationship between faith and history in the Gītā. Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that history becomes salvation history through selfless action for the human community. It is in this live moment that *chronos* becomes *kairos*. It is human loyalty to the *antaryāmin*, the indwelling God, who is present in the process of history. Thus, history is a movement that is ever open to growth, maturity and wholeness.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Siegle, 'Mirror to Mirror: Postmodernity in South Asian Fiction', citing Pupul Jayakar, *The Earth Mother* (Delhi: Penguin Books, 1989), p.5.

¹⁶³ Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, pp. 273-274.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

¹⁶⁶ Thomas, 'Some Trends in Contemporary Indian Christian Theology', p: 18.

The Hindu concept of time and history is not merely cyclical. The Hindu concept of the four *aśramas* in which a person grows from student stage to householder stage, from householder stage to the stage of forest dweller, and from forest dweller to the stage of renouncer, shows that human beings grow and progress in spiritual life in time and history.¹⁶⁷ Further, for a Hindu, the sacred is found in the secular, even in trivial things like stone, ashes, oil, water, flower and so on. All these help humans to realize the divine.¹⁶⁸

The interrelation of space and time, time as context, place and energies and the transposition of *chronos* into *kairos* by selfless action for the community, enable us to see the Christ-event as the time-space continuum, *ākāśa*, context, and an event that is repeated in space and time when *chronos* is transposed into *kairos* by selfless action. The Christ event is central and unique because it is historical and weaves space and time, past, present and future, together.

Our interpretations of Christ in terms of *Ātman*, *Antaryāmin*, *Śakti* and *Ānanda* do not limit our understanding of Christ to the interior realm of consciousness at the expense of his social involvement. The Christologies of *Ātman*, *Antaryāmin*, *Śakti* and *Ānanda* bring some new facets to the work of Jesus Christ. The mutuality between the Spirit and Christ is the hermeneutical key to interpreting the work of Christ.

¹⁶⁷ Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, pp. 258-259.

¹⁶⁸ Chethimattam, *Consciousness and Reality*, p. 206.

6.2.5 *Ātman* Christology: Its Implications for Inward Orientation of Community

The mutuality between Christ and Spirit emphasises the salvific significance of Christ and the Spirit. Both Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda emphasise the point that Christ is distinct from other humans in his deep intimate communion with God yet he does not withhold his sonship but offers us the gift of sonship. Moule points out from the scripture that we are made God's sons and daughters by "the Spirit of adoption" (Rom 8:15) or by "the Spirit of God's Son" (Gal 4:6).¹⁶⁹ *Ātman* Christology seen in the light of the mutuality between Christ and Spirit highlights the idea of reproducing Christ from within. By the Spirit, believers have the mind of Christ. The Spirit forms Christ in each person.

In the Hindu view, religion is *Sādhana*, which means that "religion is a process of life-orientation towards its integral goal, its *summum bonum*"¹⁷⁰ and this involves the interior life orientation of an individual and a community. "Every selfless act is a spiritual act, every selfish act is unspiritual."¹⁷¹ The *Gītā*¹⁷² teaches selfless action (*niṣkāma karma*) that does not desire to see the fruits of one's actions as a goal towards spiritual advancement. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* teaches that because one loves *Ātman* all the earthly relationships are dear to that person. Maitreyī is instructed by her ascetic husband that "not for the love of husband is a husband dear, but for love of the Soul (*Ātman*) a husband is dear." Similarly, "not for love of the wife is a wife dear, but for love of the Soul a wife is dear." And indeed "not for love of all is all dear, but for love of the Soul all is dear."¹⁷³ Everyday life is guided by "an inwardness of spiritual consciousness (*adhyātma Cetasā*)."¹⁷⁴ Hindu

¹⁶⁹ Moule, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 30.

¹⁷⁰ Christopher Duraisingh, 'Reflections on Indian-Christian Theology in the Context of Indian Religious Reality', *Bangalore Theological Forum*, xiv no. 3 (1982), 176-187, (p. 180).

¹⁷¹ Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, p. 244.

¹⁷² *Bhagavad Gītā* xviii, 11,23,49.

¹⁷³ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.4.5.

¹⁷⁴ Mariasusai Dhavamony, 'Indian Christian Theology', *Studia Missionalia*, 45 (1996), 95-118, (p. 102), citing *Bhagavad-Gītā*, 3.30.

theology considers Love, joy, peace and other qualities, what in Christian terms is called the fruits of the Spirit, to be the qualities of one's true self or pure consciousness. "Lasting fulfilment and joy are found by stilling the mind and driving deep within—to pure, thought free consciousness."¹⁷⁵ Renunciation is not merely giving up things but rather "renunciation is a state of being, a way of life, a form of interiorisation. Thus, it is said that the possession of wealth in itself is not unspiritual but the spirit of acquisitiveness is."¹⁷⁶ Voluntary poverty is a way chosen by Hindu sages to purify one's ego, thirst for power and possessions.¹⁷⁷ The Hindu Yoga systems consider the human being as an integral, psychosomatic unity.¹⁷⁸ Hindu spirituality focuses on the bringing together of body, mind and heart.¹⁷⁹ It tries to find solutions to problems by using a method of inner investigation.

Thus Hindu traditions offer profound intuitive insights into the understanding of human beings and society. In the transformation of an individual, it is the transformation of society that is envisaged. Seen through Hindu eye, the Christian understanding of salvation is best understood as internalising Jesus' life and message. Jesus' salvific significance is seen in "the inner dynamism which impels life", that includes "values which orient it, and the lifestyle in which the dynamism and the values find concrete

¹⁷⁵ Maria Wirth, 'Re-Discovered! Indian Psychology',

<<http://www.lifepositive.com/Mind/psychology/indian-psychology.asp>> [accessed 06 April 2004].

¹⁷⁶ Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, p. 260.

¹⁷⁷ In liberation theology, voluntary poverty is a "sociological weapon," a "political strategy" to fight against economic oppression. Aloysius Pieris, *An Asian Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1988), p. 37.

¹⁷⁸ The spiritual discipline formulated by *Patanjali* consist of two categories namely *yama* and *niyama*. *Yama* consists of non-violence, truthfulness, nonstealing, continence, and abstention from greed. *Niyama* consists of cleanliness, contentment, austerity, study, and self-surrender to God. These practices are meant to be followed not only physically, but mentally and emotionally as well: every discipline should be observed in thought, word, and deed. Spiritual disciplines require that the body, mind, and heart be united – words cannot contradict thoughts: the mind cannot be a traitor to the heart. This obviously assumes a high degree of personal integration and psychological maturity. Pravrajika Vrajaprana, 'Contemporary Spirituality and the Thinning of the Sacred: A Hindu Perspective', *Cross Currents*, 50 no. 1-2 (2000), 248-256, (pp. 250-251).

¹⁷⁹ M. Amaladoss, 'Ecology and Culture: Some Indian Perspectives', *Jeevadhara*, xviii no. 103 (1988), 40-54, (pp. 52-53).

expression.”¹⁸⁰ Samuel Rayan calls such a life “a life rendered into a pilgrimage by the Holy Spirit.”¹⁸¹ According to George M. Soares-Prabhu Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount is the “interiorizing of the law a shift in emphasis from external performance to interior intention.”¹⁸² The *dharma* of the Sermon on the Mount is the *dharma* of sonship of the experience of the *abba*¹⁸³ and this Jesus passes on to others, “the interior principle of loving action.” Hence,

Svadharmā now becomes the fulfilment of one’s individual destiny not for itself but as part of the universal destiny of man; *lokasangraha* looks to the welfare of the community, seen not as a collection of individuals who will realize their fulfilment in isolating from each other, but as a community where the welfare of each can only be achieved through the health of the whole.¹⁸⁴

According to the Indian liberation theologian Sebastian Kappen, Jesus’ message is about human beings’ dialogue with God. Jesus’ statement ‘Blessed are the pure in heart’ means blessed are “those who do not harbour evil intentions against their neighbour” and they “shall see God and in seeing God definitively transcend all law. They will then become a law unto themselves and to others, i.e. original creators of value.”¹⁸⁵ Therefore, “re-creation of the world without (structures and institutions of society) and the re-creation of the world within (structures of knowing, loving, and being which condition the inwardness of man), a twofold re-creation that can be accomplished only in dialogue with God.”¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁰ Samuel Rayan, “The Search for an Asian Spirituality of Liberation,” in *Asian Christian Spirituality: Reclaiming Traditions*, ed. by Peter K. H. Lee and David Kwang – Sun Suh (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1992), 11-30, (p. 19).

¹⁸¹ Ibid. See also Rayan, *Breath of Fire*, pp. 41-42.

¹⁸² Francis X. D.Sa, ed., *The Dharma of Jesus: Essays of George M. Soares-Prabhu*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2003), p. 182. Rowan D. Williams states that the Sermon on the Mount recalls Gītā’s teaching of selfless action. Rowan D. Williams, ‘Interiority and Epiphany: A Reading in New Testament Ethics’, *Modern Theology*, 13 no. 1 (1997), 29-51, (p. 50).

¹⁸³ *Dharma* is a familiar term in Indian context but a complex term to define. The simple meaning of this term is ‘way of life’. For Soares-Prabhu, the *dharma* of Jesus stems from Jesus’ own experience of God as *abba*, which defines his person and work.

¹⁸⁴ D.Sa, ed., *The Dharma of Jesus*, pp. 189-190.

¹⁸⁵ S. Kappen, ‘Freedom from Political Domination: Biblical Perspective’, *Religion and Society*, xxvi no. 3 (1979), 4-19, (p. 15).

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. Rowan D. Williams citing Walter A. Davis, *Inwardness and Existence: Subjectivity in/and Hegel, Heidegger, Marx and Freud*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1989, 105, explains inwardness as “a process of

In Paul's view, mature Christians "live by the Spirit,"¹⁸⁷ "led by the Spirit,"¹⁸⁸ have "the mind of the Spirit"¹⁸⁹ and ordain their lives by "the law of the Spirit."¹⁹⁰ Yet he does not separate the Spirit from Christ. Living by the Spirit means living by Christ.¹⁹¹ Also Paul does not separate individuals from the community. This is the sense emphasised in Gal 5:25 'If we live by Spirit, by Spirit let us also walk.'¹⁹² A Christological and pneumatological perspective on Christian life and ethics would focus both on inner motives and outer structures.

6.2.6 *Antaryāmin*: Its implications for God–Human–Nature relationship

Interpreting Christ in terms of *antaryāmin* has implications for the human community in general and the Indian Christian Church in particular and for ecology.

6.2.6.1 Human Community

The mutual indwelling relationship between Christ and the Spirit is non–dual that transcends the separation. It is unity in difference. The conjunction of the Spirit and Christ expresses itself in terms of 'we' and 'us.' It is a community. It makes Christ corporate and inclusive. C. F. D. Moule explains that the risen Christ is an "inclusive person" who includes individuals and communities. The risen Christ is "the very 'place' of Christian existence."¹⁹³ Daniel W. Hardy says that God's utmost love enters human life

becoming", "an integrity one struggles to bring into existence." Williams, 'Interiority and Epiphany: A Reading in New Testament Ethics', p. 50.

¹⁸⁷ Gal 5:16.

¹⁸⁸ Gal 5:18.

¹⁸⁹ Rom 8:6.

¹⁹⁰ Rom 8:2.

¹⁹¹ Francis Watson, 'The Triune Divine Identity: Reflections on Pauline God–Language, in Disagreement with J. D. G. Dunn', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 80 (2000), 99-124, (p. 120), citing James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SCM, 1975), p. 433.

¹⁹² Moule, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 28.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

in the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ when the Spirit draws individuals and community into this love. Such love is the “awesome dynamic of God’s pervasively boundary–shifting love.”¹⁹⁴ Human community that models itself on a Christological and pneumatological standpoint is genuinely inclusive. It is in mutual loving and serving one another that the community defines itself and it is the evidence that the Spirit has drawn the community into the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Thinking from the Hindu perspective, one can observe that despite the caste division in the Hindu social system, there is a thought that still remains firm that no one lives in isolation and all that dwell are an expression of divinity and are inseparably linked by one living power within each individual and in the cosmos. Thus, it is believed that a real correspondence exists between the features of individuals and the aspects of the cosmos. The Hindu community life includes even the tiniest creatures. The Code of Manu speaks about the sacrifice for human, the sacrifice for ancestors and the sacrifice for creatures. Each person has obligations to feed the poor, shelter the homeless and treat strangers as guests of God. Certain ceremonies are held to seek the welfare of the dead. Other creatures are not left out from this obligation. Taking care of domestic animals and offering food for ants are included in one’s duties. Life in all forms, living and dead, are included in the purview of community life.¹⁹⁵

The understanding of God as *antaryāmin*, and a correspondence between aspects of individual self and the aspects of cosmos, propel each human being to respect every other

¹⁹⁴ Daniel W. Hardy, 'The Future of Theology in a Complex World', in *Christ and Context: The Confrontation between Gospel and Culture*, ed. by Hilary D. Regan and Alan J. Torrance with Antony Wood (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 21-42, (p. 41).

¹⁹⁵ Moffitt, *Journey to Gorakhpur*, pp. 197-198. See also Amaladoss, 'Ecology and Culture', p. 52. Dhavamony points out that in Hindu thought there is no word for 'rights' is found rather Hindu thought concentrates on 'debts' (*rina*). Debts to parents, teachers, gods, family, society and so on. Dhavamony, 'Indian Christian Theology', p. 106.

human being irrespective of class, creed, caste, race or gender and to respect the whole of creation.

Francis X. Clooney shows how Vedānta Deśika, the fourteenth century South Indian theologian, in the sixteenth chapter of his śrīmadrahasyatrayasāra, sets forth the relationship between human and divine and the meaning of community. Deśika uses the word *śeṣa* for devotee or *bhakta*. Clooney says that the choice of the word shows that Deśika relies upon a ritual paradigm to explain the meaning of community and the divine-human relationship. Ritual paradigm is event-oriented rather than substantialist thinking.¹⁹⁶ The word *śeṣa* originally meant, “being a remainder, being a part of, existent for, and it was used to refer to things left over at the sacrifice.”¹⁹⁷

In Clooney’s view, Deśika borrows this word from the Mimāṃsā School through his predecessor Rāmānuja. In the Mimāṃsā School, Clooney points out,

śeṣa is used to explain how the multiple elements of sacrifice, mundane or more important, constitute the single sacrifice, the single event. Such things as rice, fire, songs—and even people and gods, eventually—are *śeṣa*, subordinate yet contributory, in the sacrificial performance. They have no justification there except to fulfil some helping function.¹⁹⁸

The main purpose of the ritual is the service of the Lord Viṣṇu. In sacrifice, some elements are directly helpful to the main purpose and some are indirectly helpful.

Nevertheless, all play a role.

¹⁹⁶ Francis X. Clooney, 'In Joyful Recognition: A Hindu Formulation of the Relationship between God and the Community and Its Significance for Christian Theology', *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 25 no. 3 (1988), 358-369, (pp. 367-368).

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 360.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

To be a *śeṣa* is to exist totally for the sake of the other.¹⁹⁹ Another important point about divine-human relationship and community is that service to Lord Viṣṇu who is the indwelling God, the *antaryāmin* in all, can occur only through the service of the believing community. The glory of the community is the glory of God, since all the direct and indirect elements of the sacrifice together form one single event that is the worship of Lord Viṣṇu. "If one wants to please the Lord one must please those in whom the Lord delights, his community of earth."²⁰⁰ What glorifies the community glorifies God and what hurts the community hurts God. Thus, Deśika shows that the indwelling Lord Viṣṇu and creation are bound together and the *śeṣa*'s duty is to please God by pleasing the community of God. In other words, in serving the community one recovers God's presence.²⁰¹

Hardy rightly points out that the most important task of theology today lies in "creative realization of God's presence"²⁰² in the intertwining of peoples. The Wisdom literature puts the idea of the intertwining of people and the indwelling God as: 'Wisdom builds her nest among the God-fearers' (Sir 1:15) and also the 'wise man builds his nest under her shelter, and shall lodge under her branches' (Sir 14:26). The concept of *antaryāmin* not only knits people together but also enables them to recover the divine presence in the web of relationship. Our community formation must be rooted in this truth.

¹⁹⁹ Clooney, 'In Joyful Recognition', p. 360.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 360-61. This thought is also present in the Bhāgavata Purāna. By serving the creatures the devotee serve God. Daniel P. Sheridan, 'Devotion in the Bhagavata Purana and Christian Love: Bhakti, Agape, Eros', *Horizons*, 8 (1981), 260-278, (p. 263), citing Canto XI. 2.45.

²⁰¹ John Brockington citing Rāmānuja's Gītā Bhāṣya 7:18 says that indeed the deity needs the devotee and so great is the love of the deity for the devotee. He parallels this with the Pope Pius XII's declaration in the encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943), which says that the church is the mystical body of Christ and Christ is in need of this body the church and this is an "awesome mystery (*tremendum sane mysterium*)."
John Brockington, *Hinduism and Christianity* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 27-28.

²⁰² Hardy, 'The Future of Theology in a Complex World', p. 28. Similarly, Rayan thinks that God is encountered in mutual communion among people and God dwells in relationships. Rayan, *Breath of Fire*, pp. 20, 25.

6.2.6.2 Indian Christian Church

For Abhishiktānanda and Chenchiah, the church is an open community led by the Spirit. Chenchiah criticised the institutional church and he had reasons for doing so in the Indian context. Chenchiah felt that the institutional form of the church would threaten the cultural heritage of Hindus.²⁰³ He felt the traditional institutional church was taking the place of an open fellowship of spirit-filled new humanity.²⁰⁴ But exactly here the mutuality between Christology and pneumatology in understanding ecclesiology is helpful and it can redefine what is meant by church as an institution. The early church theologians such as Ignatius and Irenaeus spoke of the mutuality between the Spirit and Christ in their understanding of ecclesiology. For Ignatius 'Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the universal church.' For Irenaeus, 'Wherever the Spirit of God is, there is the church, and all grace.'²⁰⁵ These two ideas combined together show that Christology and pneumatology are "in dialectical tension which is too divine for us to be able to break it without betraying some aspect of it."²⁰⁶

Eph 2: 20–22 says

Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

²⁰³ See for Chenchiah's discussion on the Hindu mind and the church, P. Chenchiah, 'The Church and the Indian Christian', in *Rethinking Christianity in India*, ed. by G. V. Job et al (Madras: A. N. Sudarisanam, 1938), 81-100, (pp.86-88).

²⁰⁴ M. Stephan, *A Christian Theology in the Indian Context* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2001), p. 86.

²⁰⁵ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), p. 40, citing Ignatius, *Ad Smyrnaeos* 8:2; Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 3.24.1.

²⁰⁶ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 1, p. 68.

Here both Christ and the Spirit are mentioned.²⁰⁷ Christ is the cornerstone or the foundation of the structure and the Spirit indwells the temple. Christ is the foundation of the community and the Spirit indwells the community. This speaks about the proximity of both Spirit and Christ and the integral mission in which both are involved. Paul's interchange of indwelling in Spirit and in Christ²⁰⁸ in Christian life can be extended to church. Christ and the Spirit are interdependent and mutually enhancing. Both are constitutive elements of everything.²⁰⁹ In this symbiosis the charismatic, the prophetic element and the institutional element, the rational and the mystical, clergy and laity, enrich and enhance each other. The church also acquires historical and eschatological dimensions.

In the early centuries had the church been truly catholic and given importance to the so-called heretics of the Holy Spirit, the Church would have been not only institutional but also charismatic and pneumatic.²¹⁰ Tracing back into history, Congar points out that Spiritual movements from the eleventh century onwards reacted to the hierarchical power structures by emphasising the role of the Holy Spirit. These movements emphasised inner light and spiritual experience as the basis for the daily life of a Christian.²¹¹ All these

²⁰⁷ For such a line of thinking see Timothy G. Gombis, 'Being the Fullness of God in Christ by the Spirit: Ephesians 5:18 in Its Epistolary Setting', *Tyndale Bulletin*, 53 no. 2 (2002), 259-271, (pp. 259-271) and G. D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, M. A: Hendrickson, 1994), p. 689.

²⁰⁸ Rom 8:9.

²⁰⁹ Amos Yong takes a similar position. Speaking about the relationship between *logos* and *pneuma* in general, not necessarily in relation to Church, he says, "... all determinate things consist of both *logos* and *pneuma*, the former being a thing's concrete forms, and the latter being the thing's inner habits, tendencies, and laws." Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, p. 130.

²¹⁰ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 18.

²¹¹ Congar gives a brief summary of different spiritual movements that sprang up at different times. Although differing from each other, they showed some common traits. George Fox (1624-91) emphasised inner light. This is the evidence that we are the followers of Christ. This teaching led to the formation of Society of Friends or Quakers. Pietist movement emphasised rebirth, personal faith and spiritual experience. This led Nikolaus Ludwig, Graf von Zinzendorf (1700-60) to form a new community of Moravian Brethren. Likewise, Methodism which began with Wesley, emphasised direct experience. Britain and America experienced many revivals of the Spirit. Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), led by the inspiration and direct experience before the Lord, was instrumental in the 'Great awakening' of Northampton along with George

movements arose, says Congar, because of the lack of importance paid to subjective spiritual experience in religious life. Thus, they were a reaction to rationalism. This tells us that God's intervention in human life can happen by way of mediation and also by way of immediacy. What is important here is the "inner illumination" that has occurred to people on various occasions and thus, "an irreducible personal factor enters into the instituted framework." However, as Congar very clearly states, "this does not mean that it is not Christological. It could be called an element of Christological pneumatology or pneumatological Christology."²¹²

Likewise, drawing from the Orthodox tradition, Zizioulas sees the mutuality between Christology and pneumatology as the basis of his communion ecclesiology. This guards us against hierarchy, institutionalism and a strong separation of the priesthood from the laity. The church, the body of Christ is conceived pneumatologically.²¹³ He writes:

The 'institution' is something presented to us as a fact, more or less a *fait accompli*. As such, it is a provocation to our freedom. The 'con-stitution' is something that involves us in its very being, something we accept freely, because we take part in its very emergence. Authority in the first case is something that springs from amongst us. If Pneumatology is assigned a constitutive role in ecclesiology, the entire issue of *Amt und Geist*, or of 'institutionalism,' is affected. The notion of communion must be made to apply to the very ontology of the ecclesial institutions, not to their dynamism and efficacy alone.²¹⁴

Whitefield (1714–70). Also, the Welsh revival of 1738–42 and the Pentecostal movement that began in America in 1906 are examples of inner working of the Holy Spirit. Yves Congar, *The Word and the Spirit*, trans. by David Smith (London: Chapman, 1986), pp. 48–52. See also Hoyle, 'Spirit (Holy), Spirit of God', p. 800. Similarly Moffitt points out that the voice of intuitive wisdom is not unknown to Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Dionysius, Meister Eckhart, Ruysbroeck, the Rhineland mystics and in recent times in the writings of the Quakers. Moffitt, *Journey to Gorakhpur*, p. 32.

²¹² Congar, *The Word and the Spirit*, p. 53.

²¹³ In the same way, for Lossky, the church is both the body of Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, trans. by members of the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius (London: J. Clarke, 1957), pp. 157, 174, cited in Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, pp. 71–72. In the Eastern tradition, the church is understood to be both the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit. For example, in Lossky's view, the church is the body of Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is not the continuation of incarnation but a sequel or the result of incarnation. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, pp. 158–159, in Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 72.

²¹⁴ John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985), p. 140.

In the Indian context, Chenchiah argues for a Hindu-Christian expression of Church. The Church, he feels, is a human institution, while what is needed is 'a new order of creation.'²¹⁵ Like Chenchiah, many Indian theologians argue for an Indian expression of Church in its form, content and structure. Mundadan thinks, "Indian tradition is one that lays the greatest emphasis on emptiness, renunciation and detachment. Such a tradition does not easily get stuck with institutions and structures."²¹⁶ Indeed, in the Christological and pneumatological hermeneutics of Church, just as the charismatic and institutional elements go together, so asceticism and social involvement also go together.²¹⁷ In other words, in addition to asceticism and renunciation, the church becomes a social structure. We need to emphasise that the church is both a spiritual and social reality.²¹⁸

Docetism in Christology may lead to docetism of church, emphasising its divine element and forgetting the social element. This is why we need to uncover the "'earthly' character of incarnation."²¹⁹ Also we may emphasise the concrete existence of the church forgetting that it is a spiritual reality if we do not take Zizioulas' emphasis that the Spirit brings the eschaton into history. Zizioulas writes, "the Spirit is the one who brings the eschaton into history. He confronts the process of history with its consummation, with its transformation and transfiguration...The Church's *anamnesis* acquires the Eucharistic paradox...*the memory of the future.*"²²⁰

²¹⁵ Boyd, *Khristadvaita, a Theology for India*, p. 313.

²¹⁶ Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology*, p. 74.

²¹⁷ In the view of Rupert, abbot of Deutz (d.1130 CE), the apostolic life was driven by monastic ideas and therefore, "all apostles were truly monks." O. P. Samuel Torvend, 'Lay Spirituality in Medieval Christianity', *Spirituality Today*, 35 no. 2 (1983), 117-126, (p. 117), citing *De Vita Vere Apostolica* (On the Truly Apostolic Life), (PL, CLXX, 609-64). iv, 11, (PL, CLXX, 648). He further says, "We cannot readily ignore the fact that the inner force of the church in the first feudal age (700-1050 CE) was nourished by monastic life and ideals." Samuel Torvend, 'Lay Spirituality in Medieval Christianity', p. 118.

²¹⁸ John Meyendorff, 'Confessing Christ Today and the Unity of the Church', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 18 no. 4 (1974), 155-165, (p. 161).

²¹⁹ John McIntyre, *The Shape of Christology: Studies in the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, 1966, 2nd edn (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), p. 40.

²²⁰ J. Zizioulas, "Apostolic Continuity and Orthodox Theology: Towards a Synthesis of Two Perspectives." *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 19/2, 1975, (p. 83), cited in Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis, 'East

Similarly in Congar's understanding, the church is a "spiritual communion that has a social structure."²²¹ The Church as a social structure is also an engagement with contemporary trends and a creative appropriation. Congar states, "the Church is not just an establishment where past forms are preserved. It is Tradition, and true Tradition is criticism and creativity as well as the handing-down and preservation of identical realities."²²² Thus, the mutuality of Christ and the Spirit offers unity and diversity to the church.²²³ Even within an institution, variety is possible. Instead of a single fixed form since the Spirit is characterised by freedom and communion.²²⁴ Albert C. Outler comments that the Church is an organic unity. This means it does not conform to a fixed paradigm. There are always fresh beginnings and breakthroughs in an organic unity.²²⁵

There are Christian *āshrams* in India and churches built in Indian style. Churches built in the style of a Hindu temple might allow multiple events like worshipping God by dancing, singing, having a *darśan*²²⁶ (vision/seeing the image) of God, listening to the sermon, taking a silent walk within the precinct of the church, offering flowers and fruits to God and so on. A single building can accommodate a variety of modes of worshipping and approaching God. Lipner, writing about the Hindu temple, says,

The Hindu temple embraces a host of religious paradoxes: a temporal dwelling for the timeless divine; a multiple focusing, by virtue of its many images, of one underlying divine source; a descent into the spiritual womb or cave of the heart in order to emerge into the light of divine grace and wisdom; an earthly mapping of

Meets West: Gifts of the Eastern to the Whole Church', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 37 no. 1 (1993), 3-22, (p. 14).

²²¹ Congar, *The Word and the Spirit*, p. 55.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 72.

²²⁴ John D. Zizioulas, 'The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church', *Communion*, 1 (1974), 142-158, (p. 151).

²²⁵ Albert C. Outler, 'Pneumatology as an Ecumenical Frontier', *The Ecumenical Review*, 41 no. 3 (1989), 363-374, (p. 371).

²²⁶ This term refers to religious awareness or consciousness. It is "inward beholding of a reality." Duraisingh, 'Reflections on Indian-Christian Theology in the Context of Indian Religious Reality', p. 177.

divine celestial dwellings; an ideal microcosm of the macrocosm of the world; a pure and purifying locus of life's various pollutings.²²⁷

In addition to this, a temple is a society that knits together people from various occupations like "priests involved in temple ritual, dancer-singers, musicians, builders, carpenters, sculptors, water-carriers and sprinklers, cleaners, and a host of other artisans and functionaries."²²⁸

Along with this, the Hindu view of *ākāśa*, Brahman is space, can contribute to our understanding of a church as sacred space. Panikkar says that according to the Vedas sacrifice means organising space. In the same way, Indian music is creating space for singing, playing and worshipping.²²⁹ Space is simultaneously interior as well as exterior. Panikkar points out that the term *ākāśa* means, "free or open space, vacuity." The word is derived from *a* and *kāśate* which means "to appear, shine, be brilliant." Space is that which lets things be seen, manifest themselves. It is the 'place' of revelation.²³⁰

Panikkar also observes that the Latin word for space "*spatium* (from *patere*), means to lie open, patent (cf. Spanish *patio*, an open courtyard)."²³¹ The word *chōra*, which is Plato's usage for space, means "empty, free space, open land, although also a finite region, a land inhabited but not fenced."²³²

Using these analyses of the term 'space,' we can say that the church should be a space, which is open, free, a place of revelation that is seen by others. All these ideas and the

²²⁷ Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, p. 279.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Raimundo Panikkar, 'There Is No Outer without Inner Space', *Cross Currents*, 43 no. 1 (1993), 60-81, (p. 75).

²³⁰ Ibid., pp. 75-76.

²³¹ Ibid., p. 75.

²³² Ibid.

Hindu concept of temple can enrich the concept of Church. The Spirit and Christ as constituents of the church give room for creativity and newness that would conform to mutual indwelling and communion. The Church is the result of the Spirit's work of bringing communion and solidarity among people.²³³ The Spirit, by creating solidarity and communion among people, builds a true and real church that is ecumenical and that crosses all borders. Meyendorff reminds us, "Ephesians 4:12-16 tells us that the Body of Christ is still being 'built,' that 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' *is still to be attained.*"²³⁴

6.2.6.3 Ecology

In the Bible, the Spirit is closely related to nature. Breath, wind,²³⁵ water²³⁶ and fire²³⁷ are the symbols of the Spirit. According to Mark Wallace, this emphasises the Spirit's "ecological identity."²³⁸ For the medieval Benedictine Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179) "Viriditas or greening" represents the presence of the Holy Spirit. She also uses images such as "planting" and "watering" to speak of the Holy Spirit.²³⁹ Ecological pneumatology is the power of renewal within creation. The Seventh Assembly of World Council of Churches at Canberra gathered under the pneumatological theme 'Come, Holy Spirit, renew the whole creation.' One of the Hindu participants of this assembly, Shanmugan Gangadaran, said that Hindus and Christians share in the common quest for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Another participant, Anantanand Rambachan, pointed out that Hindus and Christians share in the special sense of a transcendent God who is

²³³ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 138.

²³⁴ John Meyendorff, 'Christ's Humanity: The Paschal Mystery', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 31 no. 1 (1987), 5-40, (p. 31).

²³⁵ John 3:8; Acts 2:1-4.

²³⁶ John 4:14.

²³⁷ Matt 3:11-12; Acts 2:1-4.

²³⁸ Mark Wallace, *Fragments of the Spirit: Nature, Violence, and the Renewal of Creation* (New York: Continuum, 1996), pp. 13-14, cited by Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 161.

²³⁹ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 51, referring to Hildegard of Bingen, *Scivias* 3.7.9.

immanent in the creation.²⁴⁰ The Council's theme was a celebration of the economy of the Holy Spirit. This pneumatological theme has its Christological counterpart in the declaration of 'Behold I make all things new.'²⁴¹ Life giving energies of the Spirit permeate the whole of creation. The risen Christ is the life-giving Spirit and the Spirit is unveiling Christic presence everywhere.²⁴²

In the Upaniṣadic thought, one who knows Brahman as the essence or *rasa* in all beings has the vision of unbroken unity with all beings. Further, the divine indwelling presence in human beings and the cosmos is very well explained by the Upaniṣadic term *ākāśa*.

The space, *ākāśa* is sacred. Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.7.2 says,

For who indeed would breathe, who would live, if there were not this bliss in space?

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.5.10 says,

This space is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this space. This shining, immortal Person who is in this space, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in the space in the heart—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this *Brahma*, this All.

In the Upanisads, 'individual' and 'cosmic' are two sides of the same reality.²⁴³ The Upaniṣadic meditation the '*Dahara Vidyā*' focuses on Brahman who is in the heart of every being. *Udgitha Vidyā* focuses on Brahman the cosmic being. In the *Dahara Vidyā* meditations, the macrocosm, the cosmic reality, is realised in the human being, the

²⁴⁰ K. P. Aleaz, *Dimensions of Indian Religion: Study, Experience and Interaction* (Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1995), p. 101.

²⁴¹ Rev 21:5.

²⁴² George Lemopoulos, 'Come, Holy Spirit', *The Ecumenical Review*, 41 no. 3 (1989), 461-467, (p. 465).

²⁴³ Chāndogya Upaniṣad 8.1.2-3.

microcosm.²⁴⁴ The outer space does not exist without the inner and the inner does not exist without the outer. We are constituted both by outer and inner space.²⁴⁵ Panikkar says that “the advaitic experience of Space is thus neither that of inner nor that of outer space, but, as it were, that of the one in the other. In the inner we discover the outer, and in the outer the inner.”²⁴⁶ So Space is relationship. Spatiality is an anthropological existential.²⁴⁷ To be in space means to be in relationship.²⁴⁸ “Being is being-with (co-esse) but also being-in (in-esse).”²⁴⁹ It is in space that distinctions are possible but distinctions do not mean separation. The interconnectedness of all things or the radical relativity of reality is what Panikkar calls *cosmotheandric* experience.²⁵⁰ He says that this is the insight we get from the Buddhist *pratityasamutpada* and from the concept of *sarvam savatmakam* (the all-in all connection) of Shaivism.²⁵¹ This insight is also offered by primal religions. The innate kinship existing between divine, human and the whole of creation is the worldview of tribal communities that enables them to organise their life in oneness with nature.²⁵²

Further, in the Hebrew understanding, “to experience the *ruach* is to experience what is divine not only as a person, and not merely as a force, but also as *space* – as the space of

²⁴⁴ Chethimattam, *Consciousness and Reality*, p. 169. Rayan sees the connection between the creator Spirit and the indwelling Spirit. The Spirit who brought cosmos (beauty and order) from chaos does the same with the human heart and enables us to “evolve into ever higher forms of participation in God’s existence.” Rayan, *Breath of Fire*, p. 3.

²⁴⁵ Panikkar, ‘There Is No Outer without Inner Space’, pp. 76-77. Also, Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 276. Moltmann describes earth, air, land, water as living space or outward sides for the living beings which form the inner side of the spaces. Destruction of outward side is the destruction of the inward side.

²⁴⁶ Panikkar, ‘There Is No Outer without Inner Space’, p. 80.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

²⁴⁸ Rowan D. Williams interprets the inner life in terms of extension of time rather than space. One’s inner life grows and understands in time. He writes “My sense of the ‘hiddenness’ of another self is something I develop in the ordinary difficulty of conversation and negotiation.” Williams, ‘Interiority and Epiphany: A Reading in New Testament Ethics’, pp. 29-30. However, we argue that to be in space or to be in the interconnectedness of relationship does not negate being in time rather it includes the dimension of time.

²⁴⁹ Panikkar, ‘There Is No Outer without Inner Space’, p. 63. K. P. Aleaz points out that in the Upaniṣadic thought there is an unbroken continuum between humans and nature since both cosmos and humans are constituted by the same *panchabhuta* namely earth, fire, water, air and ether. Also, human *indriyas* (sense organs) are composed of the same elements. Aleaz, *Dimensions of Indian Religion*, p. 118.

²⁵⁰ Panikkar, ‘There Is No Outer without Inner Space’, p. 70.

²⁵¹ Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, pp. 8-9.

²⁵² Nirmal Minz, ‘Meaning of Tribal Consciousness’, *Religion and Society*, xxxvi no. 2 (1989), 12- 23, (p. 13).

freedom in which the living being can unfold.”²⁵³ It is the “broad place where there is no cramping.”²⁵⁴ In the Kabbalistic Jewish tradition, God is also understood as “MAKOM, the wide space.”²⁵⁵ The Spirit is experienced not only as breath but also “spatially as breadth” since we “live ‘in’ God’s Spirit.”²⁵⁶ It is in the Spirit, the space in us and around us that we grow.

The basic awareness of interconnectedness of all things is the solution to all ecological problems. By understanding the space in oneself one is able to understand the space outside. Therefore, “it is by solving the problem in one’s own individual consciousness that a solution on the cosmic level can be discerned.”²⁵⁷ We contain space and space contains us. We shape space and we are shaped by space. So “there is no real outer space without an inner space, that nothing will influence the outer if it does not come from the inner space...so we shape the outer space, the inner space will reverberate, and vice versa.”²⁵⁸

Environmental disaster is the result of losing sight of this relationship between inner and outer spaces. Only the true experience of the inner space would prevent us from desecrating the outer space. Panikkar writes, “If technological civilization has lost the experience of inner space, no wonder that it searches for the inner in the outer, breaking the intimacy of Nature and intruding without shame into the *garbhagrha* of Matter.”²⁵⁹

²⁵³ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 43, referring to Ps 31:8; Job 36:16.

²⁵⁴ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 178.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 43.

²⁵⁶ Ibid. Bobrinskoy speaks of the Spirit as the place of worship. Boris Bobrinskoy, ‘The Indwelling of the Spirit in Christ: “Pneumatic Christology” in the Cappadocian Fathers’, *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, 28 no. 1 (1984), 49-65, (p. 57), referring to Dt 12:13ff; Jn 4:23.

²⁵⁷ Chethimattam, *Consciousness and Reality*, p. 139.

²⁵⁸ Panikkar, ‘There Is No Outer without Inner Space’, p. 69.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 81.

Thus, the relationship between humans and nature is not one of human dominating nature but participating in nature. In the Vedic world view, "To till the earth is not only to help her to produce more and to reach her own plenitude; it is also to collaborate with the Gods in the overall action of sacrifice, to help promote the dynamism of the world and the continuance of life."²⁶⁰ We take a shift from dominating anthropology with a will to power towards an inclusive living relationship with the whole of creation. Human beings participate in nature by selfless service. It is a kind of indifference to the results of our action, which is known as "equanimity" in Buddhist terminology, "a certain calmness" or "blessed indifference," in the words of St Ignatius of Loyola.²⁶¹

Ahimsa is the way of life for such a person. *Ahimsa* can be translated as "fellow feeling for all living things, embracing in its intent even an identification at times with the flow of life in inferior living forms."²⁶² *Ahimsa* has to be understood along with the concept *Abhaya*. As we have mentioned in connection with *ānanda*, *abhaya* is complete freedom from fear. Where there is non-duality there is no *bhayam* (fear). At the same time, it also means a right use of freedom. The right use of freedom is "ex-centric, outward turning, conferring the benefits our particularity upon those with whom we are interwoven. Our freedom confers freedom through our love."²⁶³

The non-dual relationship between Christ and the Spirit becomes a model for such harmonious connection between all sentient and insentient beings. The harmony between

²⁶⁰ Raimundo Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience Mantramānjari: An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1979), p. 267.

²⁶¹ Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, p. 39.

²⁶² Winthrop, 'Indian Thought and Humanist Psychology', p. 147.

²⁶³ Daniel W. Hardy, "The Spirit of God in Creation and Reconciliation," in Wood, ed., *Christ and Context: The Confrontation between Gospel and Culture*, pp. 237-258, (p. 254).

humans and the rest of creation is the “concrete expression of a genuine impulse”²⁶⁴ The fruits of *ahimsa* and *abhaya* are a great deal of awareness of the interconnectedness of all things, sympathy towards all things, freedom from inner conflicts, equanimity of soul and love. *Abhaya* and *ahimsa* protect the individual from all alienation and bring harmonious unity between divine, human and nature.²⁶⁵

Finally, the goal of all things is Brahman. The *Madhu Vidyā* meditation in the Upaniṣads focuses on Brahman as the unifying essence of all things.²⁶⁶ All things are united and held together in Brahman.²⁶⁷ To the question, ‘To what does this world go back?’ The Upaniṣads reply, “‘To space’... Verily, all things here arise out of space. They disappear back into space, for space alone is greater than these; space is the final goal.”²⁶⁸ *Ākāśa* is Brahman and that is the goal of all beings.

6.2.6.4 Christology of Divine *Śakti*: The power of Liberation

Śakti and Wisdom being present in all things represents an immanent religion, “a healthy ‘spirit-in-matter’ mentality which transcends sexuality, not by sublimation and rejection, but by an affirmation and integration.”²⁶⁹ We are not equating *Śakti* with Wisdom but rather we say that we can find some correspondences between *Śakti* and Wisdom.

According to Wisdom literature, Wisdom is the imperishable breath in all things. Wisdom

²⁶⁴ Winthrop, 'Indian Thought and Humanist Psychology', p. 147.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.5.1-14.

²⁶⁷ Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.5.15.

²⁶⁸ Chāndogya Upaniṣad 1.9.1.

²⁶⁹ Catherina, 'Feminism and Spirituality', p. 227. Spirit-in-matter mentality avoids spirit-matter dualism. The early church theologian, Irenaeus, in his refutation of the Gnostics attempts to transcend spirit-matter dualism and emphasises the creation-redemption continuum. His theory of recapitulation presents a unified view of life. Denis Minnus, *Irenaeus* (England: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994), p. 29. The Hindu philosopher Sri Aurobindo likewise emphasises spirit-matter continuum. In his view, as we discussed earlier, there is a descent or involution of Spirit in matter and thus there is also an evolution of matter to Spirit. Therefore, any social development needs to be seen in the light of the descent of the Spirit and the ascent of matter. Aleaz, *Dimensions of Indian Religion*, p. 120, citing Ram Nath Sharma, *Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy of Social Development* (New Delhi: Atlantic, 1991), pp. 37-42, 102-104.

is kind, beneficent, all-powerful, permeates all things and holds all things in harmony.²⁷⁰ Wisdom is the source of renewal and friendship.²⁷¹ Wisdom is the divine mind immanent in this world guiding and directing all things from within.²⁷² Wisdom makes her home among humans, prepares a table and invites the simple to dine with her.²⁷³ This shows Wisdom's involvement in the cosmic creation and her homely presence among the people. She is the mother of all good things,²⁷⁴ fashions everything²⁷⁵ and orders everything.²⁷⁶ She is the "reflection of the eternal light, the mirror of the working of God and the image of divine goodness."²⁷⁷

Panikkar writes,

Wisdom is a fine lady that brings all things together in harmony, establishes justice, peace and unity. She represents God's self-manifestation, standing for the beauty, order, and wisdom of the divine plan that unfolds in the history of salvation as a reflection of the harmony that exists in God's self.²⁷⁸

Wisdom is holistic or a "unifying approach to life."²⁷⁹ It relates both to "an affective, sense-related, taste-related side and to an intellectual, cognitive, scientific side" of life.²⁸⁰

In Hinduism, wisdom, truth and *dharma* are interrelated.²⁸¹ According to Vriddha-kanakja V. 19 as cited by Panikkar,

²⁷⁰ Wisd 7:22-8:1.

²⁷¹ Wisd 7:27; 7:14.

²⁷² Denis Edwards, 'The Ecological Significance of God-Language', *Theological Studies*, 60 no. 4 (1999), 708-722, (p. 712), citing David Winston, "Solomon, Wisdom of," in *Anchor Bible* (New York: Doubleday), 1992, 122.

²⁷³ Prov 9:1-6.

²⁷⁴ Wisd 7:12.

²⁷⁵ Wisd 7:22.

²⁷⁶ Wisd 8:1.

²⁷⁷ Edwards, 'The Ecological Significance of God-Language', p. 712. Also Johnson, *She Who Is*, pp. 127-141.

²⁷⁸ J. Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, p. 44.

²⁷⁹ Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, p. 11.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

²⁸¹ Raymond E. Brown shows that in Johannine understanding, the Spirit of Truth refers to "a way of life or something that penetrates man's very being." Raymond E. Brown, "The Gospel According to John xiii-xxi" *The Anchor Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1970), p. 1138.

On wisdom (*satyam*) the earth rests, because of wisdom the sun shines, due to wisdom the wind blows: Everything depends on wisdom.²⁸²

Also according to Mahabharatha V, 1132 which Panikkar quotes,

Through wisdom the law (*dharma*) is preserved; through diligence and practice knowledge (*vidyā*) is preserved; through cleanliness beauty is preserved.²⁸³

Wisdom integrates knowledge and love, faith and work, theory and praxis. Panikkar writes, "Contemplative life is neither pure meditation nor pure action; instead, it is the action upon which one reflects and the meditation upon which one acts, the undivided life. Its name is wisdom."²⁸⁴ The presence of Wisdom can be discerned in the interconnections, in the interweaving of life. Michael O' Siadhail, an Irish poet, sings,

Infinites of space and time. Melody fragments; a music of compassion, noise of enchantment. Among the inner parts something open, something wild, a long rumour of wisdom keeps winding into each tune: cantus firmus, fierce vigil of contingency, love's congruence.²⁸⁵

Hardy comments,

Wisdom appears as hints and rumours, and its form is an open one through which there runs 'something wild', an excess of life entering all the contingencies which are all we know of existence. And this winds through each of the many tunes into which the melody of existence is now fragmented. Nonetheless, in its own 'nature', it is itself a cantus firmus.²⁸⁶

Such an understanding of Wisdom is an antidote to the subjugation of women in society and the subjugation of Spirit in theology. There is a relationship between the subjugation of women and the Spirit (the Western subjugation of Spirit to Son and the Eastern subjugation of both Son and Spirit to the Father firmly fix the place of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity). D'Costa says, "The Holy Spirit has always indeed been (implicitly) female in

²⁸² Panikkar, *A Dwelling Place for Wisdom*, p. 12.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

²⁸⁵ Michael O'Siadhail, "Motet," in *The Chosen Garden* (Dublin: Dedalus Press, 1990), p. 82, cited by Hardy, 'The Future of Theology in a Complex World', p. 32.

²⁸⁶ Hardy, 'The Future of Theology in a Complex World', p. 36.

this male economy of representation."²⁸⁷ Therefore, the concepts *Śakti* and Wisdom as integral approach to life has implications for a just society.

The hierarchical, dualistic and patriarchal models lose their relevance in this conception of religion. God/creation, mind/body, culture/nature, men/women, heaven/earth, subject/object dualities disappear. The God of immanence and relationality and the interconnectedness of all beings are meaningful in this religious viewpoint. In Tantrism *Śakti* "symbolizes total life-affirmation and is a source of all polarities, differentiation and distinction of elements."²⁸⁸ Here, distinction and diversity, as well as the conjunction of opposites are maintained. Opposites, like positive and negative poles, continuously attract each other to produce union.²⁸⁹

The *Śiva-Śakti* concept in Hinduism ensures at the conceptual level that male and female principles work together, hand in hand, as equal partners in the universe. We can also observe some similarities here with the Wisdom tradition. In Wisdom tradition, Wisdom is all-powerful, God's associate in all God's works, God's counsellor; she is the spouse of Yahweh²⁹⁰ and she sits on a throne by the side of Yahweh.²⁹¹

In Hinduism, *Ardhanariswara* is the fusion of male and female in one body. *Śakti* occupies one half of the body signifying that one is incomplete without the other.²⁹² The image of *Śiva Linga* emphasises the same idea. *Linga* (phallus figure):

²⁸⁷ D'Costa, *Sexing the Trinity*, p. 19.

²⁸⁸ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 16.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁹⁰ Wisd 8:3.

²⁹¹ Wisd 9:4.

²⁹² In Tantric teaching the "Reality is unity, an undivisible whole. It is called *Śiva-Śakti*, Cosmic Consciousness. *Śiva* and its creative power, *Śakti*, are eternally conjoined; the one cannot be differentiated from the other..." Vikrant, 'Mysticism – Christian and Hindu', *Jeevadhara*, ix no. 53 (1979), 289-310, (p. 305).

is made of black or white stone depicted sometimes as 'rounded both at top and bottom to show that it does not stand' or 'arise from' anywhere in our space or time. The Shiv Ling depicted in consummate union with the Yoni (vulva) of Shakti, is representative of the most wonderful and miraculous feature of life itself. Shiv Ling in union is a symbol—celebrating the fact that humankind has two sexes, each with its unique attributes and qualities and when they come together, they produce a synergy, they create More life, they become more than the sum of their individual parts.²⁹³

Jesus indwelt by divine *Śakti* represents matriarchal and immanent religion, integrates the polarities, and unites the discordant elements. J. R. Chandran interprets Christ as the one who breaks all barriers of separation and the one who brings a new unity and connectedness in communities.²⁹⁴ Jesus' coming is from earth, in body, manifesting the Spirit in flesh and thus integrating flesh and the Spirit. Michael Welker says, "...God's Spirit acts in, on, and through fleshly, perishable, earthly life, and precisely in this way wills to attest to God's glory and to reveal the forces of eternal life."²⁹⁵

Jesus' praxis is understood in his inclusive table-fellowship, healing and liberative acts. The medieval mystic Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) speaks of Spirit as servant and waiter.²⁹⁶ A similar idea is conveyed by the concept of *Shekinah*. The *Shekinah* is a servant and a slave helping the suffering people.²⁹⁷ Jesus' association with the Spirit brings out the humble mission that he undertook in this world. He was a "wandering charismatic", "property-less proletariat", one who "de-classes himself."²⁹⁸ His

²⁹³ 'A Tribute to Hinduism – Symbolism in Hinduism',

<http://www.tributetohinduism.com/Symbolism_in_Hinduism.htm> [accessed 15 Sept 2001].

²⁹⁴ J. R. Chandran, "C.S.I. Synod Theological Commission", *Guardian* LV, No. 29, 1968, p. 160, cited by L. E. Sahanam, "Did you Preach Jesus Christ: The Christological Focus in the Writings of Joshua Russell Chandran," *Indian Journal of Theology*, vol. 39, No. 2, 1997, 43-60, (p. 47).

²⁹⁵ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 133, citing Michael Welker, *God the Spirit*, trans. John F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), pp. 338-39.

²⁹⁶ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 55, citing Dreyer, 'Resources for a Renewed Life in the Spirit and Pneumatology: Medieval Mystics and Saints', in *Advent of the Spirit: Orientations in Pneumatology*, Conference Papers from a Symposium at Marquette University, 17-19 April 1998 (unpublished), p. 27.

²⁹⁷ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, pp. 48-49.

²⁹⁸ D.Sa, ed., *The Dharma of Jesus*, p. 32.

“charismatic authority” redefines power and takes innovative steps.²⁹⁹ Jesus is the embodiment of the power of liberation since he is endowed with the Spirit of revolution.³⁰⁰

Matriarchal religion points to immanence and the religion of earth over and against the religion of heaven and “the transcendence that has been the characteristic of patriarchal religions.”³⁰¹ However, the religion of earth and the religion of heaven, transcendence and immanence, Christology from above and Christology from below, are not incompatible. They both lead us to the same Mystery. One complements and enriches the other.

Matriarchal religion focuses on life, wholeness and thus redefines power. In Hindu tradition this is conveyed by central symbols such as “motherhood, the genitals and plant life.”³⁰² *Hiranya-garbha* or golden embryo in R̥g Veda symbolises the “womb of energy” from which the universe develops. In Tantrism *Brahmāṇḍa*, or the ‘Cosmic Egg’ symbolises wholeness.³⁰³ It is interesting to note the relationship between womb and egg and wholeness and unity. In Tantric rituals woman is regarded as an “embodiment of *Śakti*”³⁰⁴, “a reflection of the female principle”³⁰⁵, “a reincarnation of cosmic energy”³⁰⁶, “an intermediary between the transcendent and the immanent”³⁰⁷, and “she ‘is’, in flesh

²⁹⁹ D.Sa, ed., *The Dharma of Jesus*, p. 34. Also, Volker Küster, *The Many Faces of Jesus Christ: Intercultural Christology* (London: SCM, 2001), p. 11-12.

³⁰⁰ Thinking from the dalit perspective, Thumma explains that for Babasaheb Ambedkar religion itself is a revolutionary force that liberates the dalits from their dependency, slavish mentality and inferiority complex. What the dalits want is cultural, social and political revolution. Anthoniraj Thumma, *Dalit Liberation Theology: Ambedkarian Perspective* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), p. 12.

³⁰¹ Claudio Naranjo, 'The Spiritual Dimension of Psychotherapy', <<http://www.sonoma.edu/psychology/os2db/naranjo1.html>> [accessed 06 April 2004].

³⁰² Naranjo, 'The Spiritual Dimension of Psychotherapy'. Cf. Yvon Ambrose, 'The Ecological Problem in India and Its Consequences', *Jeevadhara*, xviii no. 103 (1988), 5-22, (p. 9).

³⁰³ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 45.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.* This is similar to the correlation between Sophia and woman that Johnson points out. Sophia is the image of woman and woman in turn is the image of Sophia. Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 215.

³⁰⁶ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 16.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

and blood, the goddess.”³⁰⁸ Further, the Tantric trinity emphasises yet another point, namely, that trinity includes a feminine aspect for the Tantric trinity includes *Śakti* along with *Brahma*, *Viṣṇu*, and *Śiva*.³⁰⁹

Furthermore, the religion of a woman is a religion from below. Women seek God in the ordinary context of every day life. *Rangoli*, which is also known as *Alpana* or *Kolam*, is an art made by women using rice flour, kitchen spices, colours and flowers. It is a “traditional art of decorating courtyards and walls of Indian houses, places of worship and sometimes eating places as well.”³¹⁰ *Rangoli* patterns are “an invocation of a deity.”³¹¹ “The kneeling/crouching position is a penance and prayer by itself” and “the concentration of making the lines is much like praying, chanting or saying a rosary” since it is “repetitive and calming.”³¹² The patterns are done with rice flour so that even the “minute creatures can carry the prayers to the universe as they consume the offered food.”³¹³ This is a kind of “ad hoc cathedral.”³¹⁴ Similarly in Tantric *maṇḍalas* and *yantras* the “‘cosmic-cross-points’ are created in the relative plane, at which the individual encounters the universal noumena.”³¹⁵

³⁰⁸ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 26. However, it is worth noticing Lipner’s comments at this point. He says: “It may be then that women have a positive religious and theological status in such forms of religion. But even this is ambivalent. First, note that further distinctions concerning the female sex are often called for; thus, it is usually the virgin girl or woman who is exalted in this context above her married counterparts. Second, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that though the Goddess herself may be deferred to as Supreme, her human embodiment is treated in the ritual in an instrumentalist fashion. For it is the men among the worshippers who have the leading role in the form and purpose of the ritual. Too much must not be made then of the so-called positive status of women in Tantra and Sakta religion.” Lipner, *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*, p. 289.

³⁰⁹ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 41.

³¹⁰ Jyotsna Kamat, ‘Rangoli: The Painted Prayers of India’, <<http://www.kamat.com/kalranga/art/rangoli.htm>> [accessed 14 April 2004].

³¹¹ Catherine C. Jones, ‘Rangoli’, <<http://www.sphosting.com/reverndbunny/rangoli.html>> [accessed 14 April 2004].

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, p. 15.

Matriarchal religion is also inclusive. Pupul Jayakar points out that the Vrata tradition is in many ways different from the mainline Brahminic tradition. Unlike the Brahminic tradition that patronises male hegemony and the hierarchical system, the Vrata tradition is democratic and open to all. It includes Brahmins, non-Brahmins, Shudra and tribals. This tradition is not word-bound and canonical but rather it is vernacular and localized. It includes many aesthetic forms like song, dance, visual arts, images and magical formulas of incantation and gesture.³¹⁶

Matriarchal religion conveys an important point that spirituality needs to synthesise *agape* and *eros*. “*Eros* enables us to ... letting the Divine shine forth in and through sound (music), word (poetic diction), bodily movement (dance), color (painting), and stone (sculpture) or conjointly in all or some of these, as happens in rituals and festivals.”³¹⁷

This opens up wide vistas to both literary forms of expression of the divine as well as non-literary forms of expression. Sathianathan Clarke argues that in the Indian context, Dalit Christians were alienated from text-oriented religion and express themselves in images, symbols, myths and arts.³¹⁸ Theo-logia in India, thus, ought to become inclusive of theographia and theo-phonia.”³¹⁹ Thus, religious, ethical and aesthetic dimensions converge in matriarchal religion.

A further point about the matriarchal religion of the Vrata tradition is that it focuses on the immanent mobile presence of the timeless divine and a group expression of the experience of the divine rather than one single voice. “The images of the Mother made small in

³¹⁶ Siegle, 'Mirror to Mirror: Postmodernity in South Asian Fiction', citing Pupul Jayakar, *The Earth Mother*, pp. 34-35.

³¹⁷ Mundadan, *Paths of Indian Theology*, p. 189.

³¹⁸ Clarke, 'Redoing Indian Theology', p. 129.

³¹⁹ Sathianathan Clarke, 'Constructive Christian Theology: A Contextual Indian Proposal', *Bangalore Theological Forum*, xxix no. 1&2 (1997), 94-111, (pp. 95-96).

handmolded clay rather than carved monumentally and permanently in stone like the male gods, were temporary props to a group event rather than themselves timeless. They provide a living storehouse of the archaic past continually transformed into the contemporary moment, through group action."³²⁰ This gives an understanding of time and eternity, the "archaic past continually transformed into the contemporary moment, through group action."³²¹

Thus in many ways the concepts *Śakti* and Wisdom enable us to understand God as immanent and many faceted. Jesus' praxis seen in light of matriarchal religion calls to attention Jesus' emphasis on wholeness, unity, harmony, inclusiveness and a religion from below. However, we do not stop with immanent religion since there is also a cosmological dimension to the matriarchal religion, which is often seen as the power of liberation.

Reflecting from the perspective of Hindu goddess worship, Clarke writes,

Ellaiyamman is not a goddess who merely suffers with her people. She is also the embodiment of Divine cosmic powers. Her Sakthi (power) is cosmic: she controls nature, the demons, the spirits, and, at times, even the gods. The question of how to highlight the cosmic dimension of Jesus in our teaching, reflection, preaching and praying must be asked from the point of view of our concern with sustaining and nurturing suffering people.³²²

Jesus, the power of divine *Śakti*, comes from below, is immanent and suffers with the people. But Jesus is also transcendent and cosmic for the Spirit adds transcendent, cosmic and eschatological dimensions to the historical Jesus. This is the liberative dimension of Spirit Christology.

³²⁰ Siegle, 'Mirror to Mirror: Postmodernity in South Asian Fiction', citing Pupil Jayakar, *The Earth Mother*, p. 35.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Sathianathan Clarke, 'The Jesus of Nineteenth Century Indian Christian Theology', <<http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?Title-1122>> [accessed 11 May 2003].

As we have seen, Chenchiah describes Jesus as *mahāśakti* (the great power of God) who brings new age. In the context of women's struggle for survival in the systems that disempower them, Christ comes as the power of freedom, the voice of the poor and the voiceless, the power of empowerment. Christ bestows new *Śakti* on the communities of men and women who struggle for liberation. Women want to be full human beings with a positive identity. As C. B. Webster points out, they want to be persons-in-community. He says, "The key word to self-affirmation and will for existence in one's own right is shakti-strength or power-rather than liberation."³²³ The divine *Śakti*, the transcendent and cosmic power of the new order of creation, overthrows oppressive structures and affirms the social, political and religious face and space of women. The Spirit is also the Spirit of righteousness and judgment and truth.³²⁴ The power of liberation lies in bringing revolution in structures and in patterns of thinking. In the context of hopelessness and death it is newness of life, the dignity of all human beings; hope and resurrection are the ingredients of new patterns of thinking and living.

The Nicene Creed affirms the Holy Spirit as 'the Lord, the Giver of Life.' The Spirit is the power of healing, new birth and the power of relationship. Some Old Testament passages are relevant in the context of oppression of all kinds. Eze 37: 1-14 is a significant passage for Dalit pneumatology. The Spirit breathes upon the dry bones and causes them to live. It is an experience of rebirth in the Spirit. Life, renewal and vitality are the meanings of the Spirit. Dalits who are broken and torn apart and made dry because of their caste, skin colour and social status, who are no people, have become people of God. This corporate aliveness³²⁵ comes by the Spirit who constitutes relationship and affirms the marginalised

³²³ C. B. Webster, *From Role to Identity*, p. 13.

³²⁴ Jn 16:7-11.

³²⁵ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 45. Moltmann referring to Isa 32:14-18; Isa 44: 3-5 says that the outpouring of the Spirit brings out corporate restoration.

as persons-in-community. Rosato describes the Holy Spirit as “the source and goal of all ethical ideals, and as their mysterious and fruitful inner force.”³²⁶ Also, Joel 2: 28f., where the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh is given, confers on all people, including Dalits and women, the dignity and rights of children of God. This pneumatic community experiences both immediacy with God and the joy of being a part of new communities founded by the Spirit.³²⁷ Thus, the Spirit is the source of social emancipation and the bond of peace and unity.³²⁸

In the New Testament, new creation is a reality in the Spirit³²⁹ and, with the advent of Jesus, the new creation has already begun.³³⁰ Mary’s song³³¹ sings the praises of God who stands for humanity, who is “engaged in subversive activity against the powers that dehumanise society.”³³² The Spirit who rested on Jesus is a “creative and inspiring power” that brings new life.³³³ Jesus’ Nazareth manifesto is about the celebration of human dignity.³³⁴ Ambedkar lauds Jesus as the “physician of the Untouchables.”³³⁵ Regeneration and renewal is poured out upon people through Jesus Christ.³³⁶ Jesus says, ‘if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.’³³⁷

³²⁶ Philip J. Rosato, ‘The Mission of the Spirit within and Beyond the Church’, *Ecumenical Review*, 41 no. 3 (1989), 388-397, (p. 394).

³²⁷ Rayan reflects that the Spirit brings newness and creativity and leads the community to the future. Rayan, *Breath of Fire*, pp. 16-17.

³²⁸ Eph 4:2ff. Amos Yong points out that any human communion with the ‘other’ or persons living in communities happens in the Spirit. He says that this is an ontological claim since the breath of life is in all people (Gen 2:7) and we live, move and have our being in God (Acts 17:28). Yong, *Beyond the Impasse*, p. 45. Following this, we can say that the Spirit liberates people from all man-made fetters and offers them the right to be the children of God. Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 138.

³²⁹ Jn 3:3-7.

³³⁰ 2 Cor 5:17.

³³¹ Lk 1: 47-55.

³³² Rayan, *Breath of Fire*, p. 27.

³³³ D.Sa, ed., *The Dharma of Jesus*, p. 23.

³³⁴ Lk 4: 18, 19.

³³⁵ Thumma, *Dalit Liberation Theology: Ambedkarian Perspective*, p. 74, citing Vasant Moon, ed., *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, vol. 3 (Bombay, Govt. of Maharashtra, 1987), p. 376.

³³⁶ Titus 3:5,6.

³³⁷ Matt 12:28.

In today's context, where does Jesus appear as exorcist? Soares Prabhu says, "Would he not come exorcise the demons of self-righteousness, of intolerance, of the lust for power, of divisiveness, casteism and unconcern...?" "Would he not come rather as one who gives vision and purpose to a dispirited and drifting people who sparks hope in a people driven to despair?" "Would he not start fashioning communities in which the outcaste would be welcome and the oppressed find relief...?"³³⁸

Pentecost makes the general outpouring of the Spirit that was foretold by Joel become a reality.³³⁹ Pentecost represents a "world-encompassing, multilingual, polyindividual testimony to Godself."³⁴⁰ The Spirit gives life,³⁴¹ makes people new, gives them the right of speech, offers them the Spirit of sonship instead of the spirit of slavery and fear and makes them fellow heirs with Christ.³⁴² The Spirit unites them as one body without any discrimination.³⁴³

Spirit Christology, by perceiving the association of Jesus with the Spirit, presents Jesus as the dispenser of new life to humans and creation. God's work in Jesus Christ is the guarantee of the Spirit's life-giving presence. Dunn observes that the word life is attributed to Greek *pneuma*.³⁴⁴ He says that "for John Christianity was essentially a matter of 'having life.'"³⁴⁵ It is "the experience of sheer exuberant vitality, like a stream of

³³⁸ D.Sa, ed., *The Dharma of Jesus*, p. 141.

³³⁹ Acts 2:17.

³⁴⁰ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 134, citing Michael Welker, *God the Spirit*, trans. by John F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), p. 235.

³⁴¹ Rom 8:11.

³⁴² Rom 8:15.

³⁴³ 1 Cor 12:13. Rayan says that the Spirit deals with division, oppression, discrimination. The unity that the Spirit brings is "no cover-up for divisions" and the offer of peace is "nothing cheap." Rayan, *Breath of Fire*, p. vii.

³⁴⁴ James D. G. Dunn, 'I Corinthians 15:45-last Adam, life-giving spirit', pp.127-141, (p. 132), referring to Jn 6:63; II Cor 3:6 in Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley, *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament: Studies in Honour of Charles Francis Digby Moule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973).

³⁴⁵ Dunn, 'I Corinthians 15:45-Last Adam, Life-Giving Spirit', p. 132, referring to Jn 20:31.

running water”³⁴⁶ or like a “well bubbling up within”³⁴⁷ which John speaks of in terms of new birth³⁴⁸ and new life.

For Chenchiah Christ is the second Adam who brings new life by the power of the Spirit.³⁴⁹ He is of the view that Western theology has concentrated excessively on the concept of sin. While not denying the importance of the concept of sin, he thinks that it is the ‘fullness of life’ and the ‘newness of life’ that are more meaningful in the Indian context. However, it is significant for us to point out that Jesus, the divine *śakti*, is not only the power of liberation but also reveals life-giving compassionate aspects too. Jose Comblin seeing a correspondence between maternity and the Holy Spirit speaks of the role of the Spirit as “inspiring, helping, supporting, enveloping, bringing forth.”³⁵⁰ Bringing forth new life nurturing, sheltering and caring love is a woman’s way of interpreting the salvific act of Christ.³⁵¹ This may be termed as “affective redemption,” to use Blair

³⁴⁶ Jn 7:38.

³⁴⁷ Jn 4:14.

³⁴⁸ Jn 3:3ff; 20:22.

³⁴⁹ Likewise, Laporte points out that the Adam Christology of Irenaeus shows Jesus as a pattern for human beings. Communion with the Spirit to the fullest extent and permanent possession of Spirit in contrast to occasional filling in the prophets, makes Christ the second Adam, the dispenser of life over the death that was dispensed by the first Adam. Jean Laporte, ‘The Holy Spirit, Source of Life and Activity According to the Early Church’, pp. 57-99, (p. 75) in Edward D. O’Connor, C.S.C. *Charismatic Renewal* (London: SPCK, 1978). Similarly, Michael Amaladoss points out that according to Paul, Christ is the second Adam who brings life and reconciliation in the power of the Spirit. Michael Amaladoss, “Speaking of Jesus in India Today,” *Theology Digest*, 46 no.1 (1999), p. 33.

³⁵⁰ Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 166. See also Comblin, *Holy Spirit and Liberation*, 39 and Marriage, *Life-Giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God*, pp. 58-60. Syriac authors and Orthodox theologians use the mother image for the Spirit. Ephrem mentions Spirit as feminine. McDonnell, ‘A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?’ (pp. 202-203).

Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 271. “In the *Odes of Solomon*, which originated in Syria, the Dove-Spirit is compared to the mother of Christ who gives milk, like the breasts of God. Finally, within the framework of Judaeo-Christian Ebionism, Elkesai saw in a vision an immense angel, who gave him a book: ‘This angel was immense, ninety-six miles high, and ‘was accompanied by a feminine being whose dimensions were of the same scale. The masculine being was the Son of God, the feminine was called the Holy Spirit.’” Yves M. J. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, trans. by David Smith (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983), p. 157, referring to J. Danielou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1964), p. 65. See also Marriage, *Life-Giving Spirit: Responding to the Feminine in God*, pp. 66-67. Marriage says in the Gospel to the Hebrews and in the Gospel of Thomas Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as his mother.

³⁵¹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, vol. 3, p. 156. Congar also speaks of Jesus having the disposition and love of a mother. St Anselm of Canterbury and Julian of Norwich speak of Christ’s suffering as a mother in travail. Murray Rae, ‘The Travail of God’, *International Journal of Systematic Theology*, 5 no. 1 (2003), 47-

Reynold's term.³⁵² This aspect of newness of life is significant for women since Christ's suffering can sometimes be a means to subjugate women and force them to accept passive suffering. Suffering and death are everyday experiences for women. Along with the suffering of Christ, a concomitant emphasis on the resurrection, new life and freedom is needed. Johnson sees the divine presence as "the ground of freedom itself."³⁵³ In her view,

SHE WHO IS discloses in an elusive female metaphor the mystery of Sophia-God as sheer, exuberant, relational aliveness in the midst of the history of suffering, inexhaustible source of new being in situations of death and destruction, ground of hope for the whole created universe, to practical and critical effect.³⁵⁴

Further, the traditional theology of sin concentrates on the sin of pride or self-assertion.

Women do not suffer from the sin of pride. On the contrary, they suffer from "diffuseness of personal center, overdependence on others for self-identity, drifting and fear of recognizing one's own competence."³⁵⁵ Hence, conversion for women cannot be experienced as giving up oneself but as "the ability to empower oneself and others."³⁵⁶

This holds true for other marginalised groups too. Resurrection involves an ethical character binding men and women to work toward justice and peace. Christ's resurrection means the continuation of resurrection for people and structures.³⁵⁷ Chakkarai speaks of the resurrected Christ as *Kriya Śakti* (active energy) who brings a new-world order.³⁵⁸ In

61, (p. 51), citing Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*, LX and Anselm, *Prayer* 10, *Opera omnia* 3.33.

³⁵² Blair Reynolds, *Towards a Process Pneumatology* (London: Associated University Presses, 1990), p. 103, cited by Kärkkäinen, *Pneumatology*, p. 151.

³⁵³ Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 229.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

³⁵⁵ Johnson, *She Who Is*, p. 64.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

³⁵⁷ Claudia Janssen, 'Bodily Resurrection (I Cor. 15)? The Discussion of the Resurrection in Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann, Dorothee Sölle and Contemporary Feminist Theology', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 79 (2000), 61-78, (p. 62).

³⁵⁸ R. H. S. Boyd, 'Some Indian Interpretations of the Resurrection', *The Indian Journal of Theology*, 17 no. 2 (1968), 49-61, (p. 53).

the resurrected Christ, life-giving divine energy (*Śakti*) is joined to self-giving love (*bhakti*). Thus, *Śakti* and *bhakti* are together at work in bringing the new-world order.³⁵⁹

6.2.7 *Ānanda, All in All, the Deathless Form of Joy*

The association of Spirit and Christ brings us to this conclusion, that is, the chief end of all creation. Pneumatology, Christology and eschatology are interconnected themes. The goal of human beings and the whole of creation is to be united with God. We have discussed the theme of salvation as deification in the previous chapters.

In the Upaniṣadic thought all beings come into this world by bliss. They are sustained by bliss. They return to bliss. Taittirīya Upaniṣad describes that bliss (*ānanda*) as the goal of all human beings. Gispert-Sauch sees the similarity between the human constitution in Taittirīya Upaniṣad and the Vatican II constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (14–15). He writes:

After affirming the unity of the human being, the Council describes various levels: the physical that synthesizes the elements of the material world and is expressed in a bodily *life*. Beyond this we enter into the realm of interiority where we can commune with the divine by our *intellectual* life at various levels, specially at the level of *wisdom*. At the deepest core of the human the gift of the *spirit* enables us in freedom to commune to the Divine.³⁶⁰

He concludes by saying that bliss of the Upaniṣads is what we call *homo beatus*.³⁶¹

Human beings are on a spiritual pilgrimage towards perfection, fullness and a desire to know Brahman (Brahmajijnasa).³⁶² According to Bhamavidyopaniṣad 100, Nāradaparivrājakopaniṣad 3.78, Rāmottaropaniṣad 4.1, Fullness is the Supreme

³⁵⁹ Boyd, 'Some Indian Interpretations of the Resurrection', pp. 54-56.

³⁶⁰ Gispert-Sauch, "Notes for an Indian Christology", p. 758.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Thadom, 'Purnam', p. 278, citing Śankara, Brahmasutrabhāṣya 1.1.1.

Knowledge, that is the Knowledge of the Self.³⁶³ In other words, “the experience of the Absolute is the experience of Fullness.”³⁶⁴

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 5.1.1 says,

That is Fullness, this is Fullness.
From the Fullness, comes the Fullness
When Fullness is taken from the Fullness,
The Fullness alone remains.

There is no happiness in small (*alpam*).³⁶⁵ Fullness is the experience of totality. Fullness is happiness (*sukham*).³⁶⁶ It is the experience of greatness (*mahimanam anubhavati*), limitless, infinite. Fullness is *śanta* or *turiya* or *ānanda*.³⁶⁷ According to the Upaniṣads all beings strain towards *ānanda*.³⁶⁸ “Towards *That* all creatures are drawn, for *That* they yearn. He who has attained this Bliss in himself has truly become the centre of the universe, a centre within the unique Centre.”³⁶⁹

Jesus, by possessing this bliss, becomes a unique centre and “out of his own fullness he radiates the fullness of Bliss, *ānanda, tadvanam*.”³⁷⁰ *Ānanda* is an outflow of reality beyond space–time categories of knowledge. Jesus comes to us as the one who possesses the fullness of bliss. Jesus’ innermost being can be identified with the deathless form of joy (*ānandam amṛtam Brahman*). *Ānandam* fills the self of Jesus. Rayan says “Christ’s religion is not a religion of diminished life, diminished vitality, but a religion of joy, of leaping and dancing, of exultation expressing the gladness of life.”³⁷¹ He communicated bliss to his followers. In the light of Isa 61.1 (“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,

³⁶³ Thadom, 'Purnam', p. 274.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 277.

³⁶⁵ Chāndogya Upaniṣad 7.23.1

³⁶⁶ Thadom, 'Purnam', p. 277.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 274.

³⁶⁸ Taittirīya Upaniṣad 3.1.

³⁶⁹ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 57.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ Rayan, *Breath of Fire*, pp. 22, 48-49.

because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings ...'). Moltmann sees Jesus as the messenger of Joy.³⁷² His mission is the outflow of this joy. Jesus spoke about joy, abundant life, and happiness that transcends the human categories of knowledge. The prayer in John 17: 13 speaks of Jesus' yearning for his disciples. He prays that 'they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.' He says in John 15:11, 'that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.' In Matthew 25:21, God's own joy, the joy, which is God himself, is promised to the faithful servant, 'Enter into the joy of your Lord'³⁷³ The Kingdom of God is about joy. The hidden theme in the history of Jesus' mission is joy.³⁷⁴

John's Gospel brings many themes such as glory, truth, life, light and love in connection with the Holy Spirit.³⁷⁵ The Upaniṣads connects truth and immortality with bliss. Jesus is the supreme manifestation of truth, life, light and love as these themes can be seen in connection with the Spirit. "The Spirit who rests in the Son and indwells him, *shines* from the Son and through the Son."³⁷⁶

Jesus, in the state of non-duality and freedom, becomes one with the Supreme Light (*jyotṣam jyotih*).³⁷⁷ Immortality is a state of being free from passion, free from death.³⁷⁸ The person who knows Brahman crosses over sorrow and sin and becomes immortal.³⁷⁹ One who knows Brahman becomes Brahman himself. Jesus is *satyasya satyam*. Jesus' message is *satyam* (real, light, truth) *dharma* (righteousness) *abhyam* (fearlessness), *śanti* (peace) and immortal life (*amṛtam*). It is a message of completeness, fullness of life and great joy. Gispert-Sauch asks, "Is not the definition of Gospel 'good news of great joy'?"

³⁷² Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, p. 95.

³⁷³ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, pp. 85-86.

³⁷⁴ Rayan, *Breath of Fire*, p. 122.

³⁷⁵ Jn 14:6, 6:63, 14: 15-17; 1:5; 3:19; 3:18; 6: 35-40, 65; 12: 37-50; 14: 8-11; 20: 26-29; I John 4: 1-6.

³⁷⁶ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p. 308.

³⁷⁷ Chāndogya Upaniṣad 8.3.4.

³⁷⁸ Kāṭha Upaniṣad 6.18.

³⁷⁹ Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 3.2.9.

Jesus is the "living source of love and joy at which all who wish can come and slake their thirst."³⁸⁰ Thus, Spirit Christology enables us to recover the aspect of *ananda* in Christ's mission to this world.

Further, in the Upaniṣads, *ānanda* is also a point of unity and a point of convergence. We can draw a parallel to this in Eph 1:9-10 which tells that in the fullness of time all things, not merely human beings but the whole of creation, will be brought into unity in Christ.

J. G. Bookless explains that according to Lightfoot, the word *anakephalaiosasthai* in this passage means 'the entire harmony of the universe, which shall no longer contain alien and discordant elements, but of which all the parts shall find their centre and bond of union in Christ.'³⁸¹ Beare also suggests that the word *anakephalaiosasthai* should be translated 'to bring to a focus in Christ.' All things sentient and insentient truly find their home in Christ.³⁸² This is *pūrnām*, for "the term *pūrnām* is used in the R̥g Veda as fulfilled, accomplished, rich and abundant. In the Samkhya Gṛhasutra it is used as concluded, in the Mahabharata as complete or all and in the Sankhya Brahmana as satisfied, contented."³⁸³ All find their unity in Christ through the Spirit.³⁸⁴ This is the point of blissful convergence of the history of creation and divine reality. The union point in Upaniṣadic language is *ekāyanam*, the Upaniṣadic search for the One underlying the many.³⁸⁵

However, bliss (*ānanda*) in the Upanisadic tradition does not convey an eschatological end of everything but rather points to the interiority of being. Here the Christian tradition

³⁸⁰ Abhishiktānanda, *Hindu-Christian Meeting Point*, p. 57.

³⁸¹ J. G. Bookless, 'The Summing up of All Things in Christ', *The Indian Journal of Theology*, 12 no. 3 (1963), 101-115, (p. 102).

³⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 105.

³⁸³ Thadom, 'Purnam', pp. 275-276.

³⁸⁴ Eph 1: 13-14.

³⁸⁵ Gispert-Sauch, "Notes for an Indian Christology", p. 763.

complements this understanding with the eschatological dimension since this is precisely the contribution of the Spirit (as some of the Spirit Christologists point out) to Christology.

In Spirit and Christ, all things are united to the Father and Father himself is revealed and seen in the Spirit and Christ. Jesus, who lived in the Spirit, is exalted by the Spirit and in his exaltation draws all things to himself. This manifests the Trinitarian oneness and the unity of all things in One. And the hope of all creation is oneness with God. In the end, not just Christ, not merely Spirit, not even Spirit and Christ but the Trinity is the point of convergence. God may be all in all.³⁸⁶ It is in the Trinity that unity and communion takes place since the Trinity itself is a model of such communion. To this end,

The Spirit and the Bride say 'come.'³⁸⁷

³⁸⁶ I Cor 15:28.

³⁸⁷ Rev 22:17.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

We started our study with Jesus' questions 'Who do people say that I am' and 'Who do you say that I am.' These questions point to the obligations of Christians to reflect upon the person and work of Jesus in different cultural heritages. *Logos* Christology points to one such creative encounter between the Gospel message and the Greco-Roman culture. The *Logos* language provided a framework to convey the Gospel to the Graeco-Roman world. However, along with this strength some limitations became obvious too. We have pointed out that *Logos* Christology with the two-nature framework necessitated an adequate explanation of the relationship between *Logos* and the humanity of Jesus, the relationship between the divine and the human within the one person of Christ. The Greek philosophical categories, concepts and terminologies that were used to articulate Christology were not helpful to speak of Christ's divinity without diminishing his humanity. Further, the notion of the immutability and impassibility of God, which is an inherent difficulty in *Logos* Christology posed problems in understanding Christ's death and divine involvement in the suffering of humanity and creation. *Logos* Christology concentrated more on the ontological status of Christ than on Christ's temporal life, mission, death and resurrection and the role of the Holy Spirit in all these dimensions of Christ's life.

However, it must be stated that an acknowledgement of the role of the Spirit in Christ's life and mission was not absent amongst early church theologians. They spoke of incarnation as effected by the Holy Spirit and their usage of Wisdom and Spirit language to speak of incarnation alongside *Logos* language enables us to understand that multiple ways of

interpreting incarnation were feasible in the early church. The interpretations such as the Spirit fashioning Jesus, the Spirit indwelling Jesus, filling Jesus from the very beginning, unction of the Spirit and anointing of the Spirit express the intimate relationship between Christ and the Spirit. Ralph Del Colle's study on pre-Chalcedonian Spirit Christologies brings to the fore at least three models of Spirit Christologies: a Christology of pneumatic inspiration where Jesus is seen as the bearer of the prophetic Spirit of revelation, a Christology of pneumatic incarnation where the Spirit is seen as the subject of divinity in the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh and a Christology of pneumatic communication where the Spirit is seen as the medium for incarnation and salvation. When *Logos* Christology became central, this incipient Spirit Christology receded to the background.

However, pneumatology, a forgotten area in theology, has acquired a great deal of significance in recent years and led to a fresh understanding of pneumatology in dogmatics and contextual theology. In this regard, the recent resurgence of Spirit Christology is an attempt to rejuvenate a pneumatological approach to Christology. We have identified at least three approaches in contemporary Western Spirit Christologies namely reconstruction, replacement and complementary approaches. We chose Norman Hook, G. W. H. Lampe as representing reconstruction and replacement approaches respectively and Jürgen Moltmann, John D. Zizioulas and David Coffey as representatives of complementary approach. Each theologian offers a methodological starting point for Spirit Christology.

Hook attempts to reconstruct Christ, Spirit and Trinity having the Hebrew understanding of Spirit as the point of departure. He places Jesus in the continuum of the Spirit-filled

persons of the Old Testament. However, Jesus is distinctively different from the other Spirit-filled persons since the activity of the Spirit in Jesus was continuous and not partial. The expressions such as Jesus was 'indwelt' by the Spirit or he was 'possessed' by the Spirit or he was 'inspired' by the Spirit or 'it was a state of union of human spirit and divine Spirit' or Jesus as a 'Spirit-filled man' do not take away the individuality of Jesus. It suggests that God entered and acted fully in human Jesus. In him, the Spirit acted in a new way. However, the limitation in Hook's presentation is that he conceives the Holy Spirit as a way of speaking about God's reality. The Holy Spirit is not a distinct person in the Godhead. This has consequences for our understanding of Trinity. He reduces the Trinity to just three ways of speaking about God. It is here we pointed out that the distinct economy of the Son and the Spirit needs to be clarified. Mutuality and reciprocity between Christ and the Spirit recognises the mutuality and reciprocity between pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology and places both Christ and the Spirit in a Trinitarian framework.

Lampe's argument is that the Christ-event can be interpreted using the term *Logos* or Wisdom or Spirit since all these terms denote God's outreach towards creation. Lampe finds the Spirit of God to be a useful symbol since it does not yield to the tendency of *hypostatization*. Like Hook, Lampe emphasises the mutual interaction between Jesus and the Spirit. Like Hook, Lampe thinks that the presence of the Spirit in Jesus enhances his personality rather than displacing or compromising his freedom and will. The Spirit of God is active in creation and redemption. In fact, redemption is part of divine creativity. In this continual process, Christ-event becomes central, a turning point, or a focal point revealing the perfection or complete unbroken communion between the divine Spirit and the human spirit. Christ becomes our contemporary, a present reality, as well as a past

historical character because of the activity of the Spirit of God in him. Christ's Sonship is a paradigm or archetype for all human-divine communion. This is why pre-existence of Christ or deity of Christ does not hold much significance for Lampe. Identifying the Spirit of God with the Spirit of Christ, he claims decisiveness for Christ-Spirit who leads us into the future. The Spirit forms new community, the community acquires new awareness, new consciousness and continuously lives in the Spirit. Thus, Lampe's Christological interpretation takes place within the framework of exclusive monotheism. Lampe seeks to replace *Logos* Christology with the continuous dynamic activity of God as Spirit and ultimately does not see the need of the doctrine of Trinity, and thus his construal ends up in a form of unitarianism or binitarianism. Had Lampe maintained the *hypostatic* distinctions within Godhead and spoken of the mutuality and reciprocity between Christ and the Spirit there would have been space for Trinitarianism.

If both reconstruction and replacement approaches fall short of complementing pneumatological Christology with Christological pneumatology and are thus unable to place Christology and pneumatology in a Trinitarian framework, the complementary approach alleviates this deficiency by emphasising the mutuality and reciprocity between Christ and the Spirit. Thus, it sets Christology and pneumatology in a Trinitarian framework.

Moltmann, Zizioulas and Coffey do not aim to replace *Logos* Christology but seek ways to complement it with Spirit Christology. Avoiding the traditional approach that focused on the metaphysical concept of nature and speaks of the divinity and humanity as mutually exclusive in Christ, Moltmann begins with Jesus' historical personality. The relationship between Jesus and God is perceived from the perspective of the Spirit. The Spirit rested on

Jesus and Jesus as the bearer of the Spirit defines his corporate personhood. Jesus' personhood is not something fixed from eternity but grows as he was led by the Spirit in mutual interaction with others. Jesus as the bearer of the Spirit brings new life. His salvific act touches all dimensions of human life. The Spirit is Jesus' companion all through his life and even in his suffering and finally, the Spirit raised Jesus from the dead.

For Moltmann, resurrection provides the key to understanding incarnation. So we need not always start from the pre-existence of Christ rather pre-existence can be the point of arrival and it in no way deviates from the emphasis of Chalcedon. Hence, Spirit Christology is not in opposition to *Logos* Christology but rather without obscuring the concerns of *Logos* Christology, it adds a pneumatic dimension to *Logos* Christology. Spirit Christology and *Logos* Christology, Christology from below and Christology from above, Jesus' divinity and humanity are truly complementary to each other. Moltmann's Spirit Christology links Christology and eschatology, the dimension that is understated in *Logos* Christology. It also sees a connection between the history of Christ and the Spirit's history, God's history and human history, history and nature as well as the church and the kingdom.

Like Moltmann, Zizioulas sees Christology in a broader framework of Trinitarian theology and ecclesiology. He interprets the Being of God, Christology, ecclesiology, anthropology and soteriology from the standpoint of the eucharist or the experience of Church as a community. The being of God is known in communion. As God exists in a communion of love, so the Church exists in loving communion. This identifies truth with life and life with communion. Being means life, truth is life and truth is communion. This is significant in understanding Christ as truth. Zizioulas argues that *Logos* Christology

presents revelation as pre-existing truth and thus fails to see the relationship between the historical Christ and truth. But Zizioulas maintains that since in Christ being and communion coincide, Christ is ontologically true. Christ is truth but this truth is not propositional or a logical truth but truth existing as a community and Christ-truth is realised only in the Spirit.

In Zizioulas' view, Christ can be understood in two ways: namely, Christ as an individual and Christ as a person. Christ as an individual is understood through scripture and tradition with the aid of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit mediates *a posteriori* as a guide or help to bridge the gap between Christ and humans. Whereas Christ as a person can only be understood as a pneumatological constitution, since, the Spirit constitutes the person of Christ. His emphasis is on the person of Christ rather than on the two natures in Christ.

Further, the Spirit adds two dimensions to Christology namely eschatology and communion. Christ's revelation continues in the Spirit for the Spirit frees Jesus from the particularities of history, time and space. The Spirit who was with Christ in his earthly existence continues in his death, resurrection and now as Christ existing as the church. Hence, Christ's priority over us is interpreted not in terms of temporality but in terms of inclusiveness, that is, the pneumatic constitution of Christ makes his existence an all-embracing existence. Thus Zizioulas links ecclesiology, Christology and pneumatology and complements *Logos* Christology with the pneumatic dimension and gains a Trinitarian basis for Christology.

Coffey sees a close relationship between Jesus' divine Sonship and the bestowal of the Spirit on him in the Gospels. Like Hook, Coffey thinks that the Old Testament

understanding of the Spirit and the Spirit's relationship to the servant of God would have provided a suitable background for the New Testament writers to interpret the person and work of Jesus. However, the Christ-event is radically new from the Spirit-filled figures of the Old Testament. In Christ, the Holy Spirit is revealed as mutual love between the Father and the Son. Coffey's mutual love theory affirms that the Father and the Son as mutual bestowers of love who is the Spirit includes the concerns of *filioque* that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and of the Son but also introduces something new that is unknown to *filioque* that is the Father and the Son as mutual bestowers of the Spirit.

Speaking about incarnation, Coffey says that mutual divine love is incarnate in the human love of Jesus. So for Coffey it is appropriate to say that Jesus is the incarnation of the Holy Spirit. In Coffey's view, this is the Synoptic portrayal of Jesus. The New Testament does not make a distinction between the divinity and the humanity of Jesus. The *enhypostasia* of classical theology is reinterpreted by Coffey as the human nature of Jesus subsisting in the divine Word. For Coffey, the theory of communication of idioms offers an insight that dynamic communication from divine to the human and *vice versa* is possible. If human nature can subsist in the person of the divine Word, it is also possible to say that the divine Word can subsist in the human nature of Christ.

The activities of Jesus are *theandric* (divine-human). The divine Sonship is understood by the continual bestowal of the Spirit on Jesus from his birth. The relationship between Jesus and the Father is mutual love, which is the Holy Spirit. If Jesus can return the love to the Father as his own then, like the Father, Jesus is divine. So the Sonship of Jesus is defined by the continual inspiration and mutual love between the Father and Jesus who is the Spirit. Thus, incarnation is the revelation of the Trinity itself. This Christology of mutual

love between Jesus and the Father is complementary to the descending Christology of John since the ground of this model, unlike the processional model that concentrates on the ontological order (i.e Jesus is sent by the Father) is the *abba* experience of Jesus.

Hence, Spirit Christology in general deepens the understanding of Christ. The strengths of Spirit Christology are that it affirms that Christology and pneumatology are inseparable. The Spirit is the interpretative principle of Christology. Speaking of the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit enables us to locate the incarnation in Jesus himself rather than articulating as to how *Logos* is incarnate in Jesus. Against the Old Testament background of Spirit's inspiration of the prophets and extraordinary people, Jesus' distinctiveness is understood in terms of Spirit's influence. Further, the association of the Spirit with Christ broadens the understanding of Christ's personhood. Moltmann's interpretation of Christ as a social person and Zizioulas' interpretation of corporate personhood of Christ take a shift from the two-nature doctrine to Christ's personhood as relational, concrete and communitarian. They also show that the Spirit offers Christology cosmic and eschatological dimensions.

Spirit Christology not only enriches Christology but also gives a richer understanding of the Spirit. It enables us to discern the multifaceted dimensions of Spirit's work. Spirit Christologists show the relation between pneumatology and other tenets of Christian theology. Hook and Lampe focus on the intimate communication between divine and human that leads us to conceive a pneumato-centric anthropology. Spirit Christology also recovers the idea of salvation as the union with God. Moltmann brings in the liberational aspect too, for he sees the relevance of Spirit Christology to the poor and the marginalised. Both Lampe and Moltmann speak about the kenosis of the Spirit. For Lampe the continual

descent of God offers the possibility of the continual ascent of human being to Christlikeness. Moltmann speaks of the kenosis of the Spirit in the context of Christ's suffering. Moltmann's emphasis on the cross locates the suffering in the whole Godhead. Thus, they bring a counter-argument to the impassibility of God.

While these are some of the strengths of Spirit Christology, Spirit Christology also raises issues such as adoptionism, the pre-existence of Christ, the relationship between time and eternity and the question of whether the centrality of Spirit in theologising displaces Christ from the centre or not.

Concerning adoptionism, we have shown that the emphasis of the Spirit Christologists on the inseparability of Spirit and Christ right from conception avoids the danger of adoptionism in Christology. Even if adoptionism is spotted in pre-Chalcedonian Spirit Christologies, yet such an adoptionist trend is not without its strengths. It incorporates the biblical, eschatological and soteriological elements in Christology which incarnation Christology seems to lack. So adoptionist Christology complements incarnational Christology. If Lampe raises a question about the pre-existence of Christ, Moltmann offers a solution to interpret it from a different point of view. Moltmann places Christ in an eschatological framework, which Lampe also would have endorsed, but since Lampe avoids any kind of *hypostatic* distinction, his construal ends up in binitarianism.

Moltmann's interpretation of incarnation from the resurrection point of view, avoids the problems that beset the pre-existence doctrine and sets Christology in a Trinitarian framework. Christology from below affirms Christology from above. So the complementary approach does not eliminate incarnation, 'the Word became flesh.' It

neither leads to docetism nor to adoptionism. The ontological Sonship and existential Sonship are seen together.

If this is so, then time and eternity are not opposed to each other but rather mutually interpret each other. The divinity of Christ does not necessarily depend on the traditional understanding of eternity in terms of pre-existence but rather in Christ's Spirit-filled life. The Spirit makes Christ a contemporary as well as a first fruit of new creation. Here, once again, the notion of the impassibility of God, that is associated with the idea of God as eternal, is tackled in Spirit Christology.

Finally, the question whether in Spirit Christology, the Spirit replaces Christ or not is answered by saying that in Spirit Christology there is no question of pneumatocentrism or Christocentrism. The complementary approach recognises the mutuality and reciprocity between the Spirit and Christ rather than concentrating on 'ism.' Pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology need each other and complement each other. Further, the mutual relationship between Christology and pneumatology in turn reconceives the Trinity as dynamic and circular. Thus, in various ways, Spirit Christology enriches systematic theology. In this study, we have gone further to show that Spirit Christology also has the potential to enrich Indian Christological thinking.

Although the Indian theologians Abhishiktānanda and Chenchiah, did not develop a Spirit Christology for Indian context, their pneumato-centric approach to Christology contributes to this study. Chenchiah interprets Christology as a new mutation or a new phase in evolution effected by the Holy Spirit. For this reason, Jesus' birth is biologically important for him as he considered virgin birth as a new way of procreation or a new mutation in the

evolutionary process. The Spirit descended upon Jesus and became flesh in Jesus. Jesus is GodMan reality, the fusion of God and Man. Thus without opting for the language of the creeds, he spoke of Jesus as the integration of divinity and humanity.

Unlike the Hindu *avatars* and the classical Christian view of incarnation that sees God descending from heaven for a purpose and thereafter ascending back to heaven, Jesus the GodMan reality permanently abides with humans on earth. Jesus is present now as Spirit. The Spirit is universalised Jesus. Chenchiah spoke thus in order to show the uniqueness of Jesus in trans-historical dimension. He thought that this would be logical and explicable to Hindus since Hindus seek for universal truth rather than a historical person. However, his interpretation of the Spirit as universalised Jesus blurs the identity and distinction between the Spirit and Christ.

Nevertheless, the strength of Chenchiah's Christology lies in his interpretation of the central message of Christianity as the new creation. Christ transcends humanity. He is the new man, the first fruit of new creation and the prototype of new creation. Newness of life has more profundity than the concept of sin and reconciliation. New life comes in the power of the Spirit. Christ is the new cosmic energy who brings new creation. Hence, the *yoga* of the Holy Spirit is about transformation of interior life and creating new men and women. Both Christianity and Hinduism long for this new life and the new *śakti* for this new life comes from the pneumatic dimension of Christology, which in Chenchiah's view, is a common ground between both the religions.

Like Chenchiah, Abhishiktānanda shows the significance of the centrality of the Spirit in theologising. In Abhishiktānanda's view, Upaniṣadic epistemology that focuses on

knowing God within the *guha* or cave of one's heart, throws light on the Christian understanding of the Holy Spirit as indweller. He attempts to show that the non-dual experience of Upaniṣads that goes beyond the reflective thought and the experience of divine sonship in the unity of the Spirit of Christianity could enrich and enlighten each other.

Abhishiktānanda sees a correspondence between the Vedic *OM* and the Word of God of Christianity. *OM*, the primordial utterance, is the beginning of self-manifestation of Brahman and it is through *OM* the transcendent Brahman is known. *OM* is at the beginning and at the end. *OM* ends in silence. He says that in a similar fashion, the Bible teaches that all things originate from the Word of God and it is through the Word of God the Father is known. The Son, the Word of God fills all time and space and transcends all time and space. All things originate through Christ and move towards Christ. Christ is the goal of everything, yet, only in the Spirit this goal itself is realised. This links Christology and pneumatology. He speaks about two processions, procession of the Son, the revelation and the procession of the Spirit that ends in silence.

OM is also the deep interior awakening of the Son to the Father, which is revealed in the human deep interior awakening of Jesus. Through the *advaitic* experience of Jesus that is revealed in Jesus' *abba* experience, Abhishiktānanda explains the ontological oneness or *homoousios* of Jesus with the Father from eternity. This awakening of Jesus to the Father that happens in the Spirit is at once *advaita* and communion. In the very depth of the Father's 'I' Jesus experiences his own true self in the Spirit for the Spirit is the source of communion. The Spirit is essential non-duality, *advaita*. The Spirit is the revelation of both the Father and the Son but the Spirit himself is not known apart from the Father and

the Son. The non-dual experience of Jesus with the Father in the Spirit and the *advaita* of the Spirit enable Abhishiktānanda to maintain the identity and distinction between the Spirit and Christ. So the Trinity is for him both unity and communion at the same time. The Christian understanding of communion enriches Hindu *satcitānanda*.

The insights of both Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda when brought into conversation with the Spirit Christologists reinforce some of the strengths of the Spirit Christology. First of all the conversation between the Indian thinkers and the Spirit Christologists emphasise the point that the truth of *homoousion* can be expressed in different ways and it needs to be complemented with the pneumatic dimension, that is, Jesus' deep intimate communion with the Spirit. Such an affirmation makes Christology a *marga*, a way rather than a mere conceptual formulation. It also suggests that we need a different framework to discuss the issue of pre-existence and the relationship between time and eternity, a framework that combines cosmology, Christology and eschatology. And it shows that ultimately, Christ's pre-existence indicates the experience of Christ in the present in a dimension transcending the human and temporal.

Secondly, the Spirit Christologists such as Moltmann and Zizioulas and the Indian theologians reconceive the personhood of Christ. Christ is not an abstract, isolated individual but a person in relation to others. Abhishiktānanda drawing from the Upaniṣads that see correspondences between the cosmos and humans perceives Christ as the eternal archetype of 'being-with.' Likewise, Chenchiah's interpretation of Christ as the first fruit of new creation, the one who leads the whole creation into GodMan unity, sees Christ as interconnected and interrelated with the whole cosmos.

Thirdly, both Zizioulas and Chenchiah would subscribe to the view that the synthesis of Christology and pneumatology makes Christology eschatological. Christology is not merely a study of a past historical figure but a movement towards the future. Chenchiah dwells more on the eternal, universal and eschatological dimension of Christology. The Spirit Christologists (particularly Moltmann) while speaking about the trans-historical dimension of Christology also show the relevance of the mission of the historical Jesus to the poor and the marginalised.

Fourthly, concerning pneumatology, Spirit Christologists draw attention to the manifold works of the Holy Spirit: Spirit as the source of life, immanent dweller, unifying love, gift of new life and so on. Both the Spirit Christologists and the Indian theologians make it clear that the Spirit as indweller means the Spirit plays an epistemological role and also the Spirit is an ontological reality. The Upaniṣadic teaching of knowing God within is not uncommon in biblical thought, early church theologians, Christian mystical tradition and the Eastern Orthodox tradition. Further, very similar to the idea of *perichoresis*, Abhishiktānanda highlights the idea of 'in-existence' or indwelling of Trinitarian persons within one another in his interpretation of *OM* and *satcitānanda*.

Chenchiah sees the Spirit as the great power (*mahā śakti*) of new creation. However, Chenchiah lacks the emphasis of the Spirit Christologists that the Spirit and Christ are mutual and reciprocal. The Spirit's association with Christ enriches both Christology and pneumatology. The conception of the Spirit itself becomes dynamic and takes many forms due to this reciprocity and mutuality. Abhishiktānanda's pneumatology accentuates the contemplative and interiority of the Spirit but tends to understate the liberative and dynamic activity of the Spirit in all aspects of human life and in the whole of creation.

However, both Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda contribute to the view of Salvation as *theosis* in line with the Orthodox view of salvation.

Fifthly, concerning the question of suffering, Spirit Christology underscores divine suffering over against divine *apatheia*. Moltmann's emphasis on divine pathos and Lampe's emphasis on continuous kenosis of God as Spirit show their sensitivity to relate divine suffering to human suffering. Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda do not contribute much in this area. The Spiritual quest cannot be separated from the socio-economic dimensions. This is where we pointed out that Abhishiktānanda's Eastern mysticism and Moltmann's Sabbath mysticism need to come together; likewise, Chenchiah's idea and Moltmann's idea of new creation need to come together. Chenchiah emphasising the Fact of Christ relates incarnation to resurrection and thus speaks about the newness of life as a biological fact. Moltmann focusing on suffering in God that brings new creation relates cross and resurrection and sees the relevance of divine suffering and hope of liberation to the oppressed and the whole creation.

Now, concerning the terminologies that we use to interpret Christ, both Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda suggest that articulating the meaning of Christ depends upon our epistemology. The special contribution of Indian thinking is the interiority, the dimension of the Spirit and the special contribution of Spirit Christologists (complementary approach) is the mutuality between pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology. This mutuality suggests that there is certain openness and autonomy of Spirit's role in the cosmos yet in some inexplicable way the Spirit is bound to Christ. This indicates that the Spirit's work in other religions is not absent and the understanding of the Spirit in other religions will enrich our understanding of Christ. Hence, we considered the Hindu

terminologies used by Chenchiah and Abhishiktānanda for the Spirit such as *ātman*, *antaryāmin*, *śakti* and *ānanda* as the best resources for Christological reflection. These terms are not identified with the Holy Spirit but they are at best analogous to the Spirit. They throw light on our understanding of the Holy Spirit and evoke certain hidden aspects of Christ and the Spirit.

In the Upaniṣads, the term *ātman* refers to the Brahman, the Ultimate Reality and the human self. This term when used to designate the Supreme Self, Brahman, indicates life, breath and movement. When it is used to refer to human self it means what makes an individual to be or that which constitutes the reality of a person. These meanings of *ātman* resonate with the Hebrew term *ruach*, which also means breath, wind, movement of air, God's energy, strength and activity. *Ruach* also means human self or what makes a human a human. Hence, both *ruach* and *ātman* point to the deep intimate connection between the divine Spirit and the human spirit. In the Upaniṣadic terms, as Abhishiktānanda interprets, it is communion between *ātman* and *Brahman* where *ātman* the human self is not absorbed in the divine Self. Following this, it can be stated that Jesus realised in the interiority of his human self that he was the 'I' of the Father. Jesus' statement 'I and my Father are one' reflects *advaitic* experience, that is, a kind of oneness and unity with the Father that transcends all separation. Divine and human are not mutually exclusive. Fully God and fully man are not opposite to each other but include and enhance each other.

The word *antaryāmin* means 'inner controller' or 'indweller.' In the Upaniṣads, Brahman is understood to be the inner controller and indweller of the individual soul as well as the cosmos. Brahman is *ākāśa*, the wider outer space and the inner space within a human being. Hence, it is possible to conceive that the Spirit, who indwells the cosmos, dwells

fully in Jesus. Our study of Spirit Christologies shows that the Spirit also gives trans-temporal and cosmic dimension to Jesus. The *antaryāmin* who indwells Jesus makes Jesus the *antaryāmin*, the cosmic indweller.

The word *Śakti* has many meanings in Hinduism. *Śakti* is the Goddess, the life-Spirit, creative energy and protector of people. *Śakti* is a feminine creative power, which is an inseparable part of the Godhead. Similarly, in Jewish understanding, *Shekinah* refers to divine indwelling, a feminine form of divine presence and activity. Panikkar's study on Wisdom in different traditions shows that Wisdom is not an object that can be sought after but rather the way of Wisdom is to inhabit and indwell. Hence, to say that *Śakti* indwelt Jesus is a feminine way of explaining the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit since indwelling or being indwelt by the other is a feminine experience. This way of explaining his divinity takes us beyond the metaphysical debates of the early Church and also brings out the feminine aspect of the incarnation.

Ānanda means bliss, inner tranquillity and peace. The Upaniṣads describe Brahman, as well as the core of human self, as bliss. Brahman is infinite knowledge and infinite bliss (*Vijñānam Ānandam Brahma*). Bliss cannot be explained but can only be experienced. The experience of bliss is characterized by *abhayam* (fearlessness), *śanti* (peace) and *pūrnam* (fullness). Bliss is a state of completeness, non-duality and it is the immortal state. The *pancha kośa* theory or theory of five sheaths of Taittirīya Upaniṣad explains the constitution of a person as a person consisting of food (*annamaya*), person consisting of breath (*prānamaya*), person consisting of mind (*manomaya*), person consisting of understanding (*vijñānamaya*), person consisting of bliss (*ānandamaya*). It can be stated that Jesus' innermost layer consisted of bliss to its perfection. Jesus, by possessing infinite

bliss, is immortal and one with God. The infinity revealed itself as a deathless form of joy (*Ānanda-rupam amṛtam*) in Jesus.

Thus, our *Ātman*, *Antaryāmin*, *Śakti* and *Ānanda* Christologies interpret Jesus' human life as the one lived in complete union with God. It is distinctive from human experience since Jesus had a deeper experience that defined his Sonship and oneness with God as the Spirit Christologists explain, following the Old Testament pattern of Spirit-filled persons, that Jesus is the permanent bearer of the Holy Spirit. This pneumatological interpretation of the person of Christ also gives us a pneumatological perspective to interpret the work of Christ.

The *ātman* Christology highlights the point that Jesus' Spirit-filled life becomes a supreme example for our own life in the Spirit. This gives emphasis to the interior transformation of an individual and of a community. The Upaniṣadic emphasis on interiority focuses on inner investigation of inner motives to solve all kinds of external problems. Living a selfless life, loving each and everyone for the love of *ātman* and even renunciation are seen as a form of interiorisation pointing to a deep inward transformation. Seen through the perspective of interiority, salvation can be explained as internalising Jesus' message. This is the crux of Jesus' teaching on the Sermon on the Mount. In Paul's understanding, living by the Spirit or being led by the Spirit and having the mind of Christ interpret each other.

The concept of *antaryāmin* highlights the point that Jesus is not merely a historical person. He acquires a cosmic dimension. The resurrected Christ is an inclusive person, a space, who gives space for all. This has implications for God-human-nature relationship. The Upaniṣadic concept of Brahman as *ākāśa* or space envisages an inclusive community.

Hindu community life includes the living and the dead and even the tiniest creatures such as ants. It is in the community that God's presence is realised. It is in serving the community one serves God. Seen from the perspective of *ākāśa*, the Indian Christian church is an open space that includes varieties and overcomes the stereotypic image of the church. It is an open space of revelation that invites all to participate. Further, *ākāśa* means relationship. The space is sacred. The outer space and the inner space are inextricably interconnected. The ecological problems are due to losing sight of this interconnectedness. One who understands the non-duality between inner and outer spaces participates in creating a harmonious relationship between humans and nature.

Śakti and Wisdom are not equated but both the concepts point to a holistic approach to life. Wisdom integrates knowledge and love or intellectual and affective sides, faith and work, theory and praxis. The hierarchical, dualistic and patriarchal models give way to other-affirming inclusive structures. Seen in the light of *Śakti* and Wisdom, Jesus' praxis calls to attention Jesus' emphasis of wholeness, unity, harmony, inclusiveness and a religion from below. Jesus, indwelt by the Spirit brings new life, wholeness and redefines power. Jesus is also the *maha śakti*, the great cosmic power that builds communities here and now. Women, dalits and the marginalised have hope for the present and the future.

Finally, bliss or *ānanda* is the ultimate goal of all beings. *Ānanda* is immortality, the deathless form of joy. In the Upaniṣadic thought, all beings come into this world by bliss and return to bliss. From the Christian point of view, Jesus, who lived in the Spirit, is exalted by the Spirit and in his exaltation draws all things to himself. All beings are united in Christ through the Spirit. Hence, ultimately the Trinity is the point of convergence and the goal of all things.

In the end, it must be stated that this is one way of speaking about the relationship between Christ and the Spirit using predominantly the Upaniṣadic understanding of the Spirit. This is the limitation of this study although we have tried to incorporate sources from other traditions such as Tantrism, Vrata tradition, Bhagavad-Gītā and Ramanuja's Gītā-Bhāṣya. However, we have shown that these Upaniṣadic concepts contribute to human liberation and harmonious relationship between divine, human and nature. We have also discussed the liberational aspects that the concept *Śakti* highlights.

Spirit Christology for the Indian context can also be developed using concepts from other Hindu traditions, for example from the Bhakti tradition or from the Spirit concept in indigenous religions. Thus, this study has prospects to continue in the future. As Gispert-Sauch says, Christological reflection depends on the anthropology of each culture. The Hindu philosophical system being plural, one encounters plural anthropologies. For example, the mystical union between the lover and the beloved that is portrayed in theistic Saiva Sidhanta and Tamil Sankam literature also could provide resources to interpret the person of Christ and throw much light on the spirituality of Jesus accounted in the Gospels.

The other way to develop Spirit Christology in the Indian context is by concentrating on the symbols and icons used for the Spirit in indigenous religions. For example, we may see a link between the Hebrew concept of Hokma (Divine Wisdom) and Nokma (Divine Knowledge) in the Garo society of Meghalaya. We may also see correspondences between the Nature Goddesses, the concept *Śakti* and the Spirit, expressed in feminine symbols such as breast-stones, caves, conch shells and hearth in indigenous religions. The study can be interesting when many traditions are integrated with the concept of the Spirit as the

linking thread between the traditions. When Christology is studied from this perspective, it might bring out the hidden feminine aspects of the incarnation.

We shall now conclude our study by pointing out three resources namely *Mission in The Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Indian Christian Theologies*, by Kirsteen Kim, *The Crucified Guru: An Experiment in Cross-Cultural Christology*, by M. Thomas Thangaraj and *Vedic Sacrifice: Challenge and Response*, by Israel Selvanayagam that can interact with the findings of our study on Spirit Christology and lead us further in our reflection on Spirit Christology in the Indian context. Major arguments of each book and their contributions to enhance the study of Spirit Christology in the Indian context are presented in the appendix.

Kirsteen Kim's study on the pneumatologies of three Indian theologians namely Stanley J. Samartha, Vandana Mataji and Samuel Rayan offers us the possibilities of developing Spirit Christology in a dialogical, inculturationist and liberationist frameworks respectively. M. Thomas Thangaraj's study on Guru Christology offers us the potential to correlate Guru Christology with Spirit Christology and Israel Selvanayagam's study on Vedic Sacrifice offers us the possibility of developing a Spirit Christology within the framework of *yajña*-oriented worldview or sacrificial consciousness.

Indian Christian theology is a process. Recognition of the cultural factor is equivalent to acknowledging that there is no final theology. The work of theology needs to be done again and again, for its formulations are culturally conditioned.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Pneumatologies of Samartha, Vandana and Rayan: Implications for Spirit Christology

In her important and intriguing work *Mission in the Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Indian Christian Theologies*, Kirsteen Kim, a British theologian and a missiologist, explores the theme of pneumatology with immense erudition and with great openness to diverse viewpoints. She recognises India's strong inclination towards the pneumatological dimension and a deep awareness of the mystery of God that cannot be explicated by reason alone. She claims in her work that the categories of interiority, experience and the mystery of Reality that are found in Indian theological thinking broaden the horizons of theology and missiology. Kim's study centres on the three Indian theologians Stanley Samartha, Vandana Mataji and Samuel Rayan. We have cited these theologians in our study of Spirit Christology. Analysing the predominant motif in the writings of each of these theologians, Kim categorizes them into 'dialogue', 'inculturation' and 'liberation' models respectively. She examines their views from a number of perspectives and her research opens up deep theological issues. Since our focus here is on Spirit Christology, we shall consider how her study of these theologians can critically develop certain trajectories for Spirit Christology. We shall enhance and complement her reflections on the subject of Spirit Christology.

Spirit Christology: A Dialogical Approach

Kim regards Stanley Samartha as a representative of the dialogical approach. Samartha in his theological journey moves from christomonism to theocentrism to pneumatocentrism or 'a cosmic pneumatology', 'a sense of an all-pervasive unity.' Kim points out that since Samartha is one of the pioneers of interfaith dialogue, his interest in the Spirit arises from the theology of religions. Samartha believes that the Spirit of God is at work in other religions and in their scriptures. Hence a pneumatological approach to the theology of religions will bring a greater understanding, enrichment, co-operation and reconciliation among people of different faiths.

He recognises Vedanta as a distinctive pattern of Indian thought and considers advaita as a viable framework for theologising in the Indian context. Samartha brushes off the common criticism of advaita as elitist by saying that he only focuses on the advaitic vision of the unity of God-self-world in one continuum. "He denies that the use of advaita amounts to a new imperialism and claims that he is only using his own philosophy, which he, as an Indian, prefers to Western rationality" (pp. 48-9). In his view, "advaita cannot be accused of being elitist because it is the way of life of India's poor" (p. 48). He argues that Christianity and advaita can complement each other. Christianity contributes the historical dimension to advaita and advaita contributes to Christianity the unity of life that may have been lost in the emphasis on history.

Samartha attempts to correct the christomonistic attitude in theology and believes that pneumatology is a way forward in this enterprise. Like many other Indian theologians, Samartha thinks that classical Chalcedonian Christology, which focuses on the 'substance' of Jesus Christ, is irrelevant in the Indian context. "He believes that taking advaita as a

philosophical framework frees Jesus Christ from the grip of exclusivist, rational Christianity and allows for varied ways of responding to Christ from within and without Christian faith, including the use of art – as many Indian followers of other faiths have shown” (p. 53).

Kim points out that in Samartha’s view Christ himself was God-centred or theo-centric and thus “the notion that Jesus Christ is ontologically same as God” reveals the tendency towards Christomonism in theology (p. 54). The classical Christology, which focused on the ontological status of Jesus Christ and the ontological identity of the Son with the Father was the result of Nicean concentration on the common *ousia* between the Father and the Son. Samartha denies such a move in Christology as it compromises with monotheism. He prefers to accept the deity of Christ rather than speaking of the divinity of Christ. His view of ‘Unbound Christ’ puts forth the idea that Christianity does not exhaust the person and work of Christ.

Further, to combat Christomonism in theology Samartha suggests that a recovery of the doctrine of the Trinity, minus the *filioque*, will give ‘theological space’ for Christians to break out of exclusivism and recognise the work of the Spirit in the lives of those of other faiths. In Samartha’s view, Jesus Christ was inspired by the Spirit of dialogue and the Spirit today leads us all into truth, drawing people together and creating communities.

Hence, “Jesus Christ is a distinctive instance of the presence and activity of the Spirit in the world” (p. 56). Although it is not very explicit, Samartha does have a Spirit Christology. For Samartha, as Kim explains, “this is a christology that ‘reveals the meaning of God and at the same time retains the Mystery of God’ and therefore ‘provides

the basis and power for Christians in their lives of worship, service, and witness in a religiously plural world" (p. 56). Christ is distinctive for Christians yet he is relative when seen from the perspective of the theology of religions. The lordship of Christ is reworked; triumphalist interpretations are denied and the lordship is seen in Christ's suffering. Therefore, the cross plays a major role in interpreting Christ's lordship and the resurrection vindicates Jesus' ministry.

Samartha's revised Christology and his theology of the Spirit raise several questions that Kim does not fail to recognise. Firstly, "In Samartha's revised christology, 'the centrality of Theos on the one hand and the promise of the Spirit on the other' mean that there is no place for discussion of the 'uniqueness' of Christ" (p. 56). For Samartha the distinctiveness of Christ and the universality of Christ might be relevant issues to discuss in a pluralistic context rather than the uniqueness of Christ. Kim rightly points out that

Samartha's use of advaita and his concept of the unbound Christ is intended to represent a high Christology that puts Christ on the highest plane of reality as universally accessible and active. His objection to Chalcedon is not that it gives a high place to Jesus Christ but that the Greek dualistic concepts in which the status of Christ is expressed are inappropriate to the Indian and post-colonial context (pp. 55-56).

Samartha's wish to make Christ universally accessible and active is possible if he sees the connection between the historical and the trans-historical dimensions in Christology. This precisely is one of the contributions of Spirit Christology (the complementary approach).

Secondly, does Samartha's pneumatological Christology include a Christological pneumatology? Speaking from within the Christian tradition, the mutuality between Christological pneumatology and pneumatological Christology depends upon a clear explication of the link between the incarnation and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Samartha does not fail to see the significance of Jesus' resurrection. In his view, "resurrection is God's vindication of the whole ministry of Jesus" (p. 55). He acknowledges that Christianity very remarkably contributes to the advaitic worldview its doctrine of salvation, cross and resurrection. Despite these claims, Samartha's pneumatology does not seem to link the historical Jesus with the risen Christ. Certainly, as Kim shows expounding his writings, Samartha wishes to see the connection between ultimate truth and history. In his view, advaita falls short of this link in its grand unitive vision. Again, this is possible if he allows pneumatology to impinge upon history and the dimension beyond history, either speaking about Christ or speaking from the Hindu point of view. He has not explored the potentialities of pneumatology to deepen various tenets of Christian theology as well as the theology of religions.

Thirdly, Samartha's emphasis on pneumatological cosmism, his denial of the *filioque* and his denial of the divinity of Christ raises the question whether Christology and Trinity are replaced by the all-pervading Spirit. Kim points out that Samartha's response to this criticism is that "the whole debate in Christian theology about 'subordination' is a human concern elevated to the divine level...What is important for us is the matter of relationships..." (p. 68). I think that the whole issue of subordination cannot be dismissed merely by these words since subordinationism is a serious problem that revolves around the *filioque* controversy. Thinking along with the Orthodox theologians, Samartha wishes to do away with the *filioque* altogether since he believes that "the removal of the *filioque*

clause from the creed will lead to ‘more theological space for the Spirit...to breathe freely through the whole oikoumene that includes neighbours of other faiths as well’” (p. 65).

We have shown in our study of Spirit Christology that many Orthodox theologians deem that the *filioque* is the cause of subordination of the Spirit to the Son and to the Father and inhibits the free moving of the Spirit. This is certainly a valid criticism; nevertheless, the removal of the *filioque* cannot solve the problem. With all its limitations, the *filioque* highlights the importance of recognising the distinction between the Spirit and Christ. In other words, it points to relationships. This precisely is what concerns Samartha too, as it is clear from his response to the question of subordinationism in his theology.

A clear insight into the *filioque* can be a benchmark for seeing the mutuality between pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology, as David Coffey attempts to do. If Samartha and Coffey are brought into a creative dialogue on the issue of *filioque*, it may enhance the study of Christology, pneumatology and the Trinity, and also lead us to find fresh trajectories for interreligious dialogue.

However, it must be noted that Samartha does speak about Trinitarian relationships in his theology. For example, in Samartha’s view, as Kim shows, “the Spirit functions within the Trinity to both relate and distinguish the Father and the Son makes the Trinity a model, for Christians, of the way in which the Mystery of God relates Christians and people of other faiths” (p. 68). Further, “the role of the Spirit within the Trinity provides a dialogical model for the community of religious communities; the Spirit is ‘relational distinctiveness’ or *advaita* – not two and also not one” (p. 72). Furthermore, Samartha describes the Holy

Spirit as mother alongside the Father and the Son and thus advocates a family relationship within the Trinity.

Kim remarks,

Samartha's attention to the Trinity develops alongside his pneumatology. At first the Trinity appears simply as an argument against 'christo-monism', a way of showing that, even in Christian tradition, knowledge of Jesus Christ does not exhaust theology. Samartha also wishes to preserve the Trinity in his Christian theology to protect the wholeness of the Christian gospel and prevent lapses into activism on the one hand and asceticism on the other (p. 68).

Further, he wishes to retain the Trinity in order to escape the tendency towards Spirit-monism. For him, Theocentrism, Christocentrism and pneumatocentrism are not three alternative approaches since they are interrelated within the Trinity. "Theos provides the foundation, christos the anchorage in history, and pneuma the guiding power for Christian life and witness in a pluralistic world" (p. 68).

Along with this, we can also conclude that in Samartha's thinking the mutuality between pneumatological Christology and Christological pneumatology is not completely absent. For instance, Kim's discussion on discernment of the Spirit in Samartha's thinking illustrates the possibility of such mutuality. Kim explains that, according to Samartha, God's concern embraces the whole of human life. It includes the nascent movements or movements of innovation in other faiths and ideologies, the movements that work for freedom and renewal and the fullness of life. Samartha suggests that we "acknowledge as

from the Holy Spirit all those activities, wherever they are to be found, which bear the marks of the ministry of Jesus Christ” (p. 59). This explains how Samartha links the ministry of Jesus Christ and the activity of the Holy Spirit at work now. However, Samartha goes beyond the association of Spirit with Christ to existential criteria in order to discern the Spirit even in unfamiliar areas. “He puts forward what he regards as scriptural ‘signs’ of the Spirit: life, which he associates with creativity; order, which is linked to truth; and community, which has to do with sharing” (p. 36). He seems to speak of the association of the Spirit and Christ in discerning the Spirit yet goes beyond this criterion to a decisive factor that is more general, and finally leaves it as “‘an ecumenical question’, to be resolved through inter-religious dialogue” (p. 68). This conclusion is not far from what we have said in our study of Spirit Christology.

There are a few other areas where Samartha seems to bring Spirit and Christ into close proximity. Kim remarks that:

Samartha’s theological basis for dialogue includes a pneumatological foundation. He sees the basis for dialogue as threefold: the incarnation as God’s dialogue with humanity; the open nature of the new community in Christ; and the Holy Spirit’s leading into all truth described in John 16:13 (p. 31).

Samartha is committed to his Christian heritage yet open to other faith traditions and beneath this approach to dialogue he has a theological basis that is both Christological and pneumatological, although he is not very explicit about it. Elsewhere, Kim explains that, for Samartha, “God’s concern touches the whole of human life, it is historical because it begins in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, and it is congregational in that it is done

by the community of the Holy Spirit, who discern the Spirit's work now, even in unfamiliar areas" (p. 58). Hence, it is possible to trace the association of the Spirit and Christ in different areas of his writings.

His conception of church is another area where we see the association of Spirit and Christ. Following Orthodox thinking, he conceives church as constituted by Christ and the Spirit. Samartha's church is a spiritual community committed to Jesus Christ and at the same time open and inclusive, which he calls an 'unbaptized koinonia'. Such 'unstructured small communities' or 'multiple belonging' are possible only when Christology is seen in association with the Spirit. In other words, Christology must be put in the context of "the nature and activity of God and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit" (p. 25). And the distinctiveness of Christian mission is seen in its Christological and pneumatological basis. For Samartha, "the distinctiveness of Christian mission lies precisely in its being Christian, that is, in its being rooted in God through Jesus Christ and being active in the world in the power of the Spirit" (p. 60). The activity of the Spirit is open and goes beyond the set boundaries of the church, bringing healing and wholeness to the whole creation. Such a line of thinking shows that we can glean a Spirit Christology in Samartha's writings within a dialogical approach.

Samartha uses the terms *Ātman*, *Antaryāmin* and *Śakti* and attempts to associate the Holy Spirit with these terms. Kim points out that, in his foreword to Vandana's book *Shabda Shakti Sangam* published in 1995, he "associates the Holy Spirit with the antaryamin that makes possible the union of Brahman-atman within" (p. 69). Hence, the idea of the indwelling of the Spirit and the interior dimension of human self that is open to the divine Self are common presuppositions within which he is working out his theology. Had he

pursued these concepts further, he would have developed a Spirit Christology for the Indian context. In addition, his concerns such as relating 'the eternal truths' to historical action, relating contemplation to action, faith to history, spiritual to communal and the relationship between East and West can be worked out much better within a framework of Spirit Christology.

Spirit Christology: Inculturationist Approach

Kim regards Sister Vandana Mataji as a representative of this approach. Both Christianity and Hinduism have influenced Vandana. Vandana's interest in the Spirit arises from mysticism. Kim points out that, in Vandana's view, advaita is the "soul of Hinduism" and she considers advaita as the basis for Indian Christian theology (p. 207). Vandana thinks that India's accent on interiority, awareness of the presence of the indwelling of the Spirit within all things, can be integrated with the contemplative and mystical elements of Christianity since both Christians and Hindus share in the experience of the Mystery deep within. The starting point for Indian theology is from within the cave of the heart where a personal relationship between the human spirit and the divine Spirit is possible.

Vandana speaks of Spirit in terms of *Ātman* or the Self. In her view, theology is born from the experience of Self or the *Ātman*. She gives importance to the transformation of inner being which is the work of the Holy Spirit and attempts to understand such transformation in the light of Hindu self-realisation of God. She calls it a theology of the Spirit or theology from within. Such a theology is ashramic since it is pneumatic, of the heart, and contemplative. It is feminine, experiential and intuitive. It is a way of living; it is expressed rather than interpreted.

Concerning Christ, she says that the Holy Spirit formed the heart of Jesus in the womb of Mary. "Jesus was always God's Son, but until his baptism he was not fully conscious of it... 'standing in the waters' he is 'the bridge' who leads from death to life" (p. 107). Like Abhishiktānanda, Vandana finds a parallel between advaitic experience and the abba experience of Jesus. Jesus' advaitic experience is revealed in his 'abba experience.' Jesus realises his own self, *ātman* and "the union of atman and Brahman is a reality, not merely a perception; Jesus is a true Son ..." (p. 107). Jesus' baptism makes such identification possible. It is the ultimate religious experience in the cave of the heart, awakening to His Self – the *Ātman*, the Spirit. It is the realisation of his Sonship and his unity with the Father.

Jesus offers a religion of *Ātman*, the Spirit. It is an intuitive and experiential religion. It is a religion of the heart rather than a cognitive knowledge. Christ is a "medium of the Spirit's presence" (p. 223). Jesus comes as a giver of life, the living water, the Holy Spirit. The Fourth Gospel presents Jesus as a giver of living water, the eternal life, to a Samaritan woman who in the Indian context is a *harijan* or a dalit woman (pp. 97-8).

Jesus offers the woman Himself, which is the Holy Spirit: 'Jesus brings to the world a religion of the Spirit', the atman which comes from within, from the heart. The woman's deepest needs are satisfied by the water that pours from the heart of Christ. For Vandana this event is highly illustrative of what Jesus came to do because it is linked to his passion by virtue of taking place at the sixth hour, the same hour as Jesus on the cross cried, 'I thirst' and poured out the Spirit (John 4:6; 19: 28-30; 1:33f; 20-22) (p. 98).

Reflecting from the Hindu perspective, Vandana points out that the Ganges symbolises life and using this symbol of life, she says that the true Gangaji, the living water flows from Jesus. Focusing on the living water, the Spirit, Vandana interprets Jesus as “the shining Son of Waters” (p. 100). Jesus brings new life and healing, and satisfies thirsty people by offering the gift of salvation.

However, for Vandana, the cross does not have any salvific significance in the traditional sense since she begins with a positive affirmation of human beings. Kim comments that Vandana “is optimistic about human potential because of ‘the Divinity in us’, that is, we are ‘temples of the Holy Spirit’, and she dislikes an emphasis on sin and separateness from God” (p. 110).

Following advaita, she thinks that *jnana yoga* or the deliverance from human ignorance, is the crux of the message of the cross. Kim explains that according to Vandana, “the crucifixion of Jesus was due to human ignorance rather than sin and that the moksha Jesus offers is enlightenment rather than redemption”, and Kim comments that Vandana misses here “the Jewish background of John’s gospel, with its emphasis on judgement” (p. 107).

For Vandana, Jesus’ ‘abba experience’ is significant for the understanding of authentic spirituality. Christian life and spirituality is a life lived in the experience of the Spirit. It is a yoga of becoming one with God. The human spirit is yoked to the Spirit or *Ātman* who is the *Antaryāmin*, the Inner Dweller. Kim points out that according to Vandana,

The ‘Indian face of Christ’ is ‘inward-turned’ contemplating the *antaryāmin*.

Likewise, those who gaze on the pierced heart of Jesus (with their hearts rather than

with 'the critical eyes of the mind') are 'drawn within' into the depths of their own hearts and experience *advaita*. Therefore, in the last analysis, for Vandana, it is the Heart of Christ, the Spirit, the *advaita* that is ultimate not Jesus Christ himself. The Heart is unique but universally accessible, not necessarily through Christ (p. 109).

A kind of guru Christology can also be traced in Vandana's interpretation of Christ. Jesus is a guru "who leads the follower to the living water which is the Spirit that pours out from his heart" (p. 224). Jesus is her *Param Guru*. Christ is distinctive in being the source of life and secondly in being the *chit* of *saccidananda*. Christ is "the echo of the unique I am" (p. 108). However, in Vandana's view, "what is unique about Jesus is not his guru-ship but his heart. The Sacred Heart is the Womb of the Universe, the Source of the life-giving Spirit" (p. 108). Hence, this does not deter her from speaking about other gurus in other religions. "She sees the Christian faith as one of many alternative ways of approaching the One, and believes Christian mysticism is enhanced by knowledge of Hindu techniques. She attempts to show how all spiritualities and all gurus ultimately converge with other ways and lead to the same mysterious Source" (p. 224).

Vandana also brings a feminine dimension to the idea of guru. Mary, who was overshadowed by the Spirit and did her part in Christ's mission because of the power of the Spirit, "is compared to a female guru, who is a mother-figure. The guru image also makes her a female counterpart of Christ in Vandana's theology, a God-woman" (p.125).

Moreover, the idea of the Holy Spirit as mother is predominant in Vandana's theology.

Kim quotes Vandana:

'Over the years I have grown to see and believe that the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity whom we call the Holy Spirit (spiritus Breath of God) or the Atman of the Upanishads is the 'Motherhood' in God; the Mother who gives life – prana or the vital energy by which we are able to live, think, talk, love, etc., all by the same one energy.'

Kim comments that the emphasis on "shakti as Spirit and Mother–aspect of God, the 'Spirit–Mother' has become a major plank in Vandana's theology" (p. 128).

Like Samartha, Vandana speaks of a family relationship within the Trinity. She sees the Holy Spirit as the "Love–Energy...standing between the Father and the Son" (p. 135) or as the mother who is "the loving link between the Father and the Son" (p. 226). Further, the Holy Spirit is "the speech' 'the Love', 'the embrace or the kiss between the Father and Son'" (p. 134). Vandana thinks that the Holy Spirit as Mother–Spirit who unites the Father and the Son in the Trinity will also be able to bring communion between Christians and Hindus.

Thinking from the Hindu point of view, she sees *Śakti*/Spirit as the feminine aspect of God. She conceives *Śakti* in the form of Saraswati. Saraswati, the consort of Brahma, is Vāc–Devi, the Goddess of speech. She is the Goddess of 'fertility', 'beauty' and she is "the source, sustenance and ultimate goal of all creatures" (p. 127).

Vandana interprets Mary in the light of Hindu female representations of God. Mary, who was possessed by the Spirit of God, had the triple powers of the Devi, namely the power of knowledge (*jnana śakti*), of hoping (*iccha śakti*) and of loving (*kriya śakti*). She sees parallels between these three powers and the Christian ideas of faith, hope and love.

Further, Mary was a woman of 'pure consciousness' and this is the meaning of Virgin Mary or Mary the Immaculate. It is by the power of the Spirit or *Śakti* that Mary becomes the divine mother (p. 126).

Kim explains that in *In Waters of Fire*, Vandana compares Mary to water. "Mary, like water, was creature – ordinary, unnoticed, quiet, serviceable, lovely, and precious." Its property of bringing forth and nurturing life, means that water, like Mary, is regarded as mother – an image recognised in the Vedic designation of the Ganges as mother, *Gangā-mata*. Mary and the water of the Ganges are purifying, both give 'life and bread', and both offer 'service without looking for any reward'" (p. 126). Thus, Vandana connects motherhood, Spirit, and liberation. "Like Mary bringing Jesus to birth in this earth in a spiritual sense is the calling of all women" (p. 125).

Mary is also seen as a model for ashramic spirituality, which is at the heart of Vandana's theology. Kim shows that for Vandana ashramic spirituality is a "spirituality of interiority" and a "cosmic creation spirituality" (p. 94). Mary's "selfless service makes her 'the Model and Mother of *Karma Yoga* and her interiority makes her 'the Mother and Queen of *Sannyasis*'" (p. 125). Ashramic spirituality is feminine like Mary in showing tolerance and being inclusive. It is not overburdened with institutionalism and structure. Inner transformation brings about transformation of social structures and this is a characteristically Asian, Marian and Gandhian way. Ashramic spirituality is a holistic approach to life, which realises the oneness with the One Spirit and connectedness with the universe and all people. In Vandana's view it is in tune with the feminist, dalit, inter-faith and ecological movements.

Christ's primary presence in the ashram is the Holy Spirit. Meditation rather than the Eucharist is the centre of ashram life.

The 'oneness' produced by the ashrams as the result of the Holy Spirit poured out from 'the Heart of Christ on the Cross', should spill over to produce harmony between religions and thus global peace. 'Openness' is the crucial factor in achieving this, and it is in this respect that ashrams differ from the cloistered tradition of Western monasteries (p. 87).

Ashrams can appeal to both East and West since they satisfy people's quest for an authentic life, a quiet contemplative life in a world of too much of activism, thus they can be an alternative to the institutional church.

Thus, the ashramic spirituality, Jesus' advaitic experience, Jesus as guru, the Holy Spirit as mother and the Marian spirituality are valuable contributions of inculturationistic approach of Vandana. Now what are the prospects and limitations of these insights seen from the perspective of Spirit Christology?

Firstly, although Vandana works with the presupposition that Christ is the Son of God sent by God, the ascent of Christ is much more pronounced in her theology than the descent of Christ. This raises the question whether or not she succumbs to adoptionism in Christology. The answer is that she attempts to avoid adoptionism by emphasising Jesus' union with the Father, especially when she speaks about the abba experience of Jesus. For her the Spirit is "the 'One-ing principle' not only within God but also uniting man to God" (p. 104). However, this will not sufficiently avoid adoptionism. Along with the Spirit's

role at the baptism of Jesus, a clear emphasis on the Spirit's role in the resurrection of Christ is necessary to avoid adoptionism and speak about the cosmic and eschatological dimensions of Christology. This is the emphasis of the Spirit Christologists of the complementary approach.

Secondly, in many instances, as Kim points out, Vandana seems to give a significant place to the advaitic experience of Christ rather than to the person of Christ. Therefore, one can say that Vandana's Christology is neither ontological nor functional but advaitic experience-oriented. She lets go of Jesus and clings on to his inward experience. This explains why she emphasises the baptism of Jesus rather than the cross. Further, as Kim shows, Christ is important in so far as he is a way of life. Christ leads us into the Spirit of oneness, which is the final goal. Hence, the Spirit of oneness is primary and the person who leads to the goal becomes secondary. Again, when she speaks about Jesus as guru, Jesus' teachings are emphasised rather than Jesus' person and work. Jesus as guru is significant in so far as he leads the disciple to come into contact with the True Self. Moreover, in her understanding, Jesus as guru appears as "a contemplative rather than an activist" and, if there is any significance at all to Jesus' deeds, it is seen as "the effects of the Spirit rather than deliberate acts done in the face of opposition. The result is that, though an element of discipline is implied by sadhana there is no sense of struggle in Jesus ministry" (p. 106).

At this point, we need to ask how far Vandana, by depending on advaitic experience and the Universal activity of the Spirit on the one hand and Christ's Sonship on the other, is able to affirm the doctrine of the Trinity, the distinction between the Spirit and Christ and the distinctiveness of Jesus Christ? – These questions are pivotal if one wishes to use

Vandana's theology as a resource to develop Spirit Christology in the Indian context. The following quote from Kim answers these questions:

Achieving a trinity of three persons in mutual relationship is difficult for those relating to advaita, because advaitic thought would seem to exclude ultimate diversity, and this makes monism difficult for Vandana to avoid. In Vandana's images of the Trinity, the stress is undoubtedly on the Spirit/Ananda component. At times this priority of the Spirit seems to make it unnecessary to consider the other Persons at all. The Spirit defines the person and work of Christ and the Spirit creates (or is) oneness with Brahman, who is otherwise unknowable, so the Spirit becomes not only 'the driving force' of Vandana's theology but the whole of it and it tends toward a philosophy of the Universal Spirit. On the other hand, Vandana also presents a very personal love-relationship with Jesus, a form of bhakti devotion, which she expresses in poetry. Though, in her understanding, love surrenders the self so that ultimately bhakti becomes jnana yoga and the personal God is transcended, conversely she also sees the highest form of jnana as bhakti because of her emphasis on the heart. So Vandana's theology is both personal and impersonal (p. 136).

Certainly, Vandana's theology is both personal and impersonal but Christ's distinctiveness is subsumed in the overall activity of the Universal Spirit. This is why, she emphasises that "inner peace, openness, simplicity, joy and beauty" which she considers as the characteristics of ashramic spirituality, serve as the signs of Spirit's presence (p. 203). She accepts that Christ is distinctive in many ways, particularly in being *chit* of *satcitananda*, but this is not developed further. She has a high Christology in mind but works out a low

Christology within an advaitic framework. What is lacking is the relationship between the presupposition that she has in her mind, and what I call the advaitic experience-oriented pragmatic Christology that she works out for the Indian/Hindu context. As Kim rightly recognises that Vandana presents a pneumatological Christology without a Christological pneumatology.

However, Vandana contributes to develop a Spirit Christology in terms of *Vāc* and *Śakti*. She presents *Vāc* as analogous to *Śakti*. *Vāc* in Vedic understanding means 'Word.' Thinking from the Hindu point of view, Vandana's correspondence between *Vāc* and *Śakti* can pave a way to dialogue between Vedic and *Śakti* tradition and, thinking from the Christian point of view, can show Word Christology and Spirit Christology to be complementary. Also, her correspondence between *OM* and the Word can contribute to seeing the mutuality between Word and Spirit Christologies. In her view, as Kim puts it, "By chanting the Om, the unstruck sound, the primordial vibration, she believes it is possible to get in tune with the Cosmic Sound and become united with 'the Word that is God', and then to communicate the Word in silence" (p. 113). Further, she sees a link between silence and the power of God. "Mary was overshadowed by Pure Silence, the power of God Parashakti" (p. 113). The connection between the interior dimension that expresses itself only in pure silence and the exterior dimension that shows forth in life-giving power shows that there is a link between the interior dimension and liberative acts. Although Vandana does not speak much about liberation in the face of oppression in Indian society, she guides us to the source of liberative power. In her theology, *jnana yoga*, *bhakti yoga* and *karma yoga* are interrelated.

In addition, Vandana contributes to the perception of a link between *ānanda* and beauty. She describes the Spirit as Joy or Bliss and says that this aspect is missing in Christian theology. She also appeals to beauty since *sundaram* in the Hindu trinity *satyam sivam sundaram* refers to beauty. Hence, *ānanda* in *satcitananda* and *sundaram* in *satyam sivam sundaram* are seen together. This is a very valuable contribution to Spirit Christology, which can be explored further.

Spirit Christology: Liberation Approach

Kim regards Samuel Rayan, an Indian liberation theologian, as a representative of this approach. She explains that Rayan's interest in the Spirit arises from a desire for liberation. For Rayan "pneumatology is not a separate chapter but 'the How and the Horizon of theology'. Since the Spirit is "'the universal point of contact' between God and the world, the Spirit is both the point of entry and the point of departure for theology" (p. 160). The two foci of Rayan's theology are the Spirit's work in creation and the liberating activity of Jesus. The Spirit descended on people in the Old Testament and was at work in the lives of many Spirit-filled people. The Spirit descended on Mary in the New Testament, on Jesus at his baptism. Then the Spirit descended on the disciples at Pentecost. The Spirit is at work now in different ways; the Spirit is the initiator of new movements and guides the course of history in order to bring life, unity, relationships, communities and wholeness. The Spirit is at work in creation as a whole, in turning chaos into cosmos.

Kim points out that the man Jesus who was filled by the Spirit of God is "the primary reference-point" for Rayan's theologising (p. 144). Rayan's Spirit Christology presents Jesus as "'completely human and wholly graced, suffused with the Spirit of God.' Jesus is

the symbol of the Holy Spirit” (p. 179). Kim observes “Rather than seeing the Spirit’s activity in the world as something consequent upon the work of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is set in the context of the on-going work of the Spirit” (p. 159). In Jesus, we “discover most clearly what it means to be ‘a spiritual person’” (p. 158). The *avatar* concept is not absent in Rayan’s Spirit Christology. Kim explains that, “On the basis of the cosmic activity of the Spirit, Rayan sees further possibilities in interpreting Christ as Avatar. He also argues that Christ could be presented to ‘India’s masses’ ‘as the final and perfect living image of God fashioned by God himself’” (p. 181).

The Spirit was with Jesus throughout his ministry. The resurrection is “the climaxing activity” (p. 179). It is the symbol of new life and of liberation. The resurrection was Jesus’ “fullest and most decisive experience of the Spirit’ when he became the one who baptises with the Holy Spirit” (p. 178). Hence, “Jesus Christ is therefore ‘the definitive sign of universal salvation’ and he, not the church, is ‘the universal sacrament of salvation’” (p. 180).

However, in Rayan’s view, as Kim points out,

Salvation does not begin with Jesus but ‘Jesus reveals it, realizes it historically, and becomes its perfect exemplar, the New Humanity’. Jesus is unique as a normative manifestation of God but, since God is active in Jesus, the salvation Jesus offers is for all. Jesus is ‘decisive and absolute’ for the Christian but not exclusive and we may expect other mediations of the same salvation (pp. 182-83).

Rayan's concern is more than salvation in the traditional sense of the term. Rayan is a representative of Third World theology. The crucial question for him is how Christ is relevant today to the stark reality of India. In Rayan's view, this task of theology can be undertaken only in the power of the Spirit "in a situation of tension and dialogue, seeking always to understand, to re-interpret, and reword the Christ-reality as called for by concrete experiences and encounters" (p. 148). Rayan brings together contemplative life and the struggle for liberation. He sees a dialectic relationship between action and reflection, theory and praxis, interiority and social involvement, contemplative and prophetic, ethics and spirituality.

The message of Jesus is the Kingdom of God. Jesus' statements 'the Spirit of God was upon me' and 'the good news to the poor' are linked. The Kingdom of God that Jesus preached is "a visible social reality" (p. 160). Jesus identified himself with the Dalits. Jesus is "enfleshed and situated among us in a new Humanity" (p. 167). Historical Jesus becomes a sacrament of God because of his concern for human needs and struggle for liberation. "The 'Breath of God' inspired him to think and speak 'in images and pictures rather than in general statements or abstract propositions' as a 'poet of the people'" (p. 168). Jesus' whole human life is energized by the presence and activity of God. He is the connection between breath and bread. Both are symbols of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit offers desire for both breath and bread in human beings. Jesus is the bread of life and the one who breathes the Spirit of God. The mission of liberation integrates these two poles. Bread and breath combine earth and heaven, the human and divine, the immanence and transcendence of God. Jesus' praxis reveals that there is no conflict between liberation and spirituality, theology of nature and theology of grace, evangelisation and development,

sacred and secular since there is a link between the 'universal operation of the Spirit' and 'the christic character of life'.

The Spirit works in human hearts and history. History is a "movement of the Spirit to bring liberation" (p. 156). The Spirit of the risen Christ is present with us today. The Spirit of the risen Christ is the very basis for liberation since resurrection inspires an earning in human beings for more life. Rayan believes that "part of the uniqueness of biblical religion is that 'Jesus' self-identification with the victims of injustice means that the grief of the oppressed is now the symbol and sacrament of the grieving Holy Spirit of God" (pp. 169-170). An understanding of the Spirit is not uncommon to Asians since Asia has the "profound sense of the Spirit' and able 'to intuit the Divine as the depth reality of things' and is aware of 'the ultimate Self of every self'" (p. 168). Hence Rayan thinks that the liberation theology must take into account the spirituality of the people particularly the awareness of God within one's self. This awareness is prior to theology and the quest for justice. Interiority or the experience of the Spirit at the depths of our heart leads only to a greater and deeper involvement in society. For Rayan, it is "in the depths of suffering, struggling, wrestling with God that the Spirit meets people and that theology is born" (p. 170).

Love and praxis, "openness and response-ability" (pp. 165-66) are linked in theology when interior spiritual life and human existence on earth are taken seriously. In Rayan's pneumatology, the indwelling Spirit and *Śakti* the power of liberation from all kinds of oppression, play an equal part. Kim observes that Rayan takes up *Śakti* since he is suspicious of Brahminical tradition. In his view, *Śakti* tradition gives space to embrace dalit, feminist and tribal traditions rather than the oppressive Brahminical tradition.

Hence, Rayan focuses on small communities, what he calls 'the little tradition', the humble communities that express their faith in symbols, art, music, dance, painting, sculpture, poetry, story, silence and in their egalitarian social organisations. All Indian religions share the common struggle for liberation. Christianity contributes "to the growth of love and the enhancement of humanness" (p. 174). The Spirit's manifestation takes place in people and Rayan calls them the "icons of the Holy Spirit", that is, people who, like Jesus, 'love liberty and uphold human dignity'" (p. 172).

In Rayan's pneumatology, the theme of joy or *ānanda* is not absent. Kim points out, "In Rayan's theology, this 'Spirit who lives within our depths' is also the Spirit of joy, and Rayan finds this to be the case in both Hindu and Christian thought. In the ferment of every creative and liberative movement, Rayan finds 'there is the Joy of the Holy Spirit...welling up unto life' which results in all kinds of creative exuberance" (p. 170).

Also the motherhood of the Spirit is a prominent theme in Rayan's pneumatology. Kim writes, "Rayan sees the Spirit in Christian tradition also as Mother and regards her chief characteristics as those associated with motherhood: comforting, nourishing, inspiring, supporting, enveloping, giving birth, teaching us to pray" (pp. 163-64).

Further, Rayan's ecclesiology has much in common with the Orthodox ecclesiology and with Samartha's thinking. Rayan, like Samartha and the Orthodox theologians, thinks that the Spirit constitutes both Christ and the Church. In his view, the problem of hierarchy in the church, the search for Christian unity, the problem of conversion – all will find a solution in Spirit ecclesiology. In the base communities he "sees the signs of a return to the New Testament experience of the Spirit, of 'collegiality, lay participation...witness and

teaching, and the home-church'. This will also include the liberation of women for ministry" (p. 162).

Now, returning to his theme of *Śakti*, Rayan sees *Śakti*, the power of liberation, at work in the universe. Hence, it is possible to claim 'cosmic sisterhood/brotherhood' not merely with all humans but also with all creation. Such pneumatological cosmism brings out the relationship between history, nature, Christology, pneumatology and cosmology. The Spirit of God dwells in the heart of everything that exists. Therefore, nature is to be respected:

Rayan describes the earth as 'God's cherished bride' and also God's sacramental self-manifestation. The earth is also 'ours', it is 'a large round of bread God bakes, a big bowl of rice God cooks each morning over the fire of God's heart'. The earth is our mother, our common body and the object of shared human concern. The preciousness of the earth to God and to us means that it should not be held as private property but shared and protected from commercialisation, from global imbalance in population density, and from ecological crisis (pp. 186-87).

Rayan's pneumatocentric approach offers possibilities for a full-fledged Spirit Christology. Although Rayan presents a Spirit Christology from a liberation perspective, it is sporadic and he has not endeavoured to develop it as a new paradigm for Christological reflection in India. We shall now mention some of the strengths and limitations of Rayan's Christology and pneumatology.

Firstly, Rayan's starting point for Christology is the historical Jesus. Does this lead him towards a kind of adoptionism in Christology? He clearly maintains that the Spirit was at work in the annunciation, the baptism, the resurrection and Pentecost. That the Spirit was at work in the annunciation avoids adoptionism. Further, Kim explains that in Rayan's view,

The baptism of Jesus at the Jordan was not the first but 'a fresh, more personal experience of the Holy Spirit', which 'includes and guarantees the coming of the Spirit on all of us and on our earth'. At the resurrection, Jesus was 'wholly transformed and fully humanized' so it became the proof of Jesus' Sonship that provided humankind 'with the possibility of a future' and must be seen as 'the work of the Holy Spirit'. Rayan sees the Pentecost as revealing 'the whole meaning and significance of Jesus for human history and human destiny' as the disciples are empowered to participate in his mission' (pp. 178-79).

Reflecting on the different approaches to Spirit Christology we can say that, like Moltmann, Rayan attempts to interpret incarnation from the perspective of resurrection. Christology from below and Christology from above are complementary and not mutually exclusive.

Secondly, like the Spirit Christologists, Rayan thinks that the resurrection of Jesus makes him 'the eschatological reality' which is the work of the Spirit. The risen Christ is a 'transforming influence' in history. Kim explains,

For Rayan, the Spirit is 'the principle of the new resurrected life of Jesus'. Though he does not cite him, Rayan's thought here bears some similarities to Chenchiah's understanding of the Spirit as the new creative energy, which also relates to Shakti, but Rayan differs in his stress on the Spirit's activity in the original creation and his attention to the downtrodden (p. 179).

Thirdly, as Kim observes, Rayan rightly thinks that the concept that "the Spirit of the risen Christ is at work in India leads him to find Christological possibilities in most (if not all) of them – even the 'elitist' philosophy of advaita" (p. 182). This is a very valid point.

Further, it is clear from his writings that Rayan prefers to interpret Christ through the history of the Universal Spirit since "the genius of India seeks the Universal Spirit' and 'the historical particularity of Jesus has been a difficulty in the way of accepting him as the Universal Spirit and the Saviour of all'" (p. 171). Further, a Hindu will accept criticism from within and for this reason we need to be immersed in Hindu tradition. This raises the question whether Rayan has multiple audiences in mind, namely the high tradition and as well as the little traditions. In my view, theology for multiple audiences is what we need in India today and this all-embracing approach is possible since pneumatology offers such possibilities of dialogue between the so-called 'high' and 'little' traditions. Rayan's approach offers a clue to further this line of thinking.

Fourthly, Jesus can be a *marga* or the way only if he is also a liberator. "So Rayan is of the opinion that an Indian Christology will 'centre on the Lord who is Spirit, the risen Lord, on the indwelling Christ, the Antaryamin, and on the Christ whose body we are', and that this will lead us to discover and experience Christ as the true and Ultimate Self or our true self" (p. 182). This suggests a way to explore the concept of *antaryāmin* as

expounded by Ramanuja, the world as the soul of Brahman. This has implications for understanding human self, human dignity, the dimension of community and nature.

However, there are some limitations to Rayan's theology that Kim observes, we will present some of her remarks here and offer a response at the end.

Firstly, "It is possible for Shakti to be as totalising as Rayan complains advaita is, if both posit a universal spirit" (p. 177).

Secondly, "Rayan's universal Spirit is all-embracing and perhaps overwhelming. Without attention to the Trinitarianity, there seems little room in Rayan's theology for genuine diversity within unity" (p. 178).

Thirdly, "In his theological framework, the Spirit appears at discrete moments of history and then disappears again. The epiphanies of the Spirit are not connected with one another in the historical plane, their connection is a metaphysical one. For the historian this discontinuous view of history is unsatisfactory. For the theologian it raises questions not only of hermeneutics but also of ecclesiology, given that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church" (p. 181).

Fourthly, "In defining the criterion for discernment of the Spirit as liberation and not inculturation, Rayan may also be succumbing to the temptation of 'putting God in a box'" (p. 149).

I agree with all of Kim's criticisms. In sum, her criticisms reveal that Rayan and Indian theologians in general (the three theologians we have considered here) by focusing on the Universal Spirit in Indian/Hindu theological context do not seem to do justice to the distinctiveness of the person and work of Jesus Christ. The historical dimension and trans-historical dimension of incarnation are considered but not sufficiently linked and finally the Trinity has no significance or less significance in their theology.

This precisely is the reason why we need to consider some of the emphases of Western Spirit Christologists. The question that Western Spirit Christologists (the complementary approach) raise is how far Jesus' significance, for example the cross and the resurrection, play a part in this overwhelming activity of the Universal Spirit. The complementary approach suggests that the mutuality between Christological pneumatology and pneumatological Christology offers ample space to speak about the significance of Jesus, tie the Spirit to the historical Jesus and the risen Christ, place both Christology and pneumatology in a Trinitarian framework yet give autonomy to the Spirit. Gavin D'Costa's view of non-identical repetition of revelation is relevant at this point. This gives us space to accommodate different religious traditions, secular movements, and the little traditions of Rayan yet to stand within the Christian tradition. This is why there is a need for dialogue not only within Asian religious traditions but between Asian and Western traditions too. Such an enterprise can mutually correct, contribute and enrich these traditions.

Conclusion

The distinctive contribution of Indian thinking is an integral vision of life. Indian tradition emphasises that religion is a way of life and a view of life. The three Indian thinkers we have looked at take seriously the Indian religious background and the work of the Universal Spirit in the world. We have looked for connections between these three Indian thinkers and the different features of Spirit Christology. We shall conclude this section by reinforcing a few observations that we have expressed already in the different parts of this section.

The three Indian thinkers, in their concern to link theology with spirituality, give priority to the Universal activity of the Spirit. Consequently in their Christology the precedence of the Spirit of Christ over the Word of Christ is obvious. Further, how the economies of the Son and the Spirit are identified and differentiated remains ambiguous and, as a result, they are unable to build the different facets of their theologies into a Trinitarian system. This is why we suggested at various points in the course of our study that a creative dialogue between Indian thinkers and the strengths of Spirit Christology by way of mutual correction and enrichment will furnish contours of Spirit Christology in the Indian context. Now, we may raise the question why we need a Trinitarian structure at all. Thinking from both the Christian and Hindu point of view the Trinity seems to be the strongest frame of reference to speak about correlation between these two religious communities since both traditions point to a Trinitarian mode of thinking, although they differ very much in their expressions.

Another area that needs to be looked at is the relationship between high and low traditions. Along with this goes the debate between inculturation and liberation and, taking it a little further, the debate between contextual and classical theologies.

The debate between high and low traditions largely hinges on the way we construe pneumatology. We need to see the pneumatology from above and below as a whole as we do with Christology from above and below. In other words, the sent-ness of the Spirit (Rayan) which has its basis in the Pentecost, the in-breaking and transforming power of the Spirit and the given-ness of the Spirit (Vandana and Samartha) which has its basis in Johannine concept of bestowal of the Spirit need to be seen together. In this wholeness, the division between pneumatology from above and pneumatology from below can be overcome. The division between Brahminical and *Śakti* traditions might give way to a creative dialogue between high and little traditions. This can also be a good starting point to bridge the gap between inculturation and liberation.

All three theologians stress the importance of intuition and the inadequacy of reason to comprehend the Ultimate Mystery. They give due place to experience in their theologising. All three theologians emphasise the interiority of Christian faith. The Spirit in the depths of human experience and the unpredictability of the Spirit make rational formulations impossible. Kim comments that

The Indian association of the Spirit with experience (*anubhava*) and the stress of Samartha, Vandana and Rayan on the role of experience in theologising puts them firmly on the side of 'contextual' as opposed to 'classical' hermeneutics. In the

international arena their work amounts to a plea for contextual theologies, especially from the Third World, to be heard and taken seriously (p. 200).

While I agree with Kim that we need to claim due place for contextual theologies, I think that, with the ever increasing reality of a global world, what we need is also a dialogue between contextual and classical theologies. However, it must be noted that any new theology can only come out of a creative dialogue between text, tradition and context. The East and the West need to meet in every innovation in theology in order to prevent a kind of parochialism in theology. Hence, in the final analysis, the debate between inculturation and liberation, the relationship between East and West needs to be looked at in a broader framework. With these words, we shall conclude this section and move on to the next book, *The Crucified Guru* by M. Thomas Thangaraj.

Appendix II

Guru Christology and Spirit Christology

Thomas M. Thangaraj's *Crucified Guru: An Experiment in Cross Cultural Christology* is a very interesting piece of work on Christology that attempts to integrate Christian understanding of the distinctiveness of Jesus Christ with Saiva Siddhanta's concept of guru. Thangaraj shows that both Christianity and Saiva Siddhanta contribute to each other; by mutually correcting and enriching, they add new facets to Christology and thus present Jesus in a new light. In this section, we shall summarise the main arguments of Thangaraj's guru Christology and then see guru Christology in relation to Spirit Christology or, in other words, guru Christology and Spirit Christology in correlation.

Thangaraj is a bilingual person well versed in both Tamil and English. Thangaraj sees this as strength since a bilingual person is "self-consciously a *bicultural*" person (p. 20). He is at ease with both Tamil and Western culture. He has also inherited two theological languages, namely Hindu and Christian. Further, he is both a poet and a theologian. He claims that all these assets enable him to construe theology locally as well as globally.

He writes, "The world we live in today is an interconnected and interdependent one where the line between what is local (or contextual) and what is global is disappearing. The global has invaded the local and the local has entered the global" (p. 23). The interweaving of local and global in many areas of our lives today shows that "being cross-cultural or bilingual is no longer a luxury; it has become a necessity" (p. 24). Hence, in such a situation we need to

attempt to construct a Christology that is local–global in order to avoid either “narrow parochial vision of Christ” or “a deceptively universal portrayal of Christ” (p. 25).

Reflecting on the debate on the incarnation that began in the Western world with the publication of the book *The Myth of God Incarnate*, he remarks that debate on the adequacy of incarnation language or *Logos* language continues today among Christian theologians.

However, he points out that discussion of incarnation is not limited to Christianity for there was much lively discussion among Hindu theologians too, particularly from the eleventh to the thirteenth century CE. He observes that the concept of guru can be discovered within this intra–Hindu discussion. The objective of his study is to employ this Hindu symbol to explicate the meaning of Christ for both Christians and Hindus.

The scope of his study of the concept of guru is limited to one particular tradition, namely, Saiva Siddhanta. The word Siddhanta is a combination of two Sanskrit terms namely ‘siddha’ and ‘anta’. Siddha means ‘established’ or ‘admitted to be true or right’, and anta means ‘end’ or ‘conclusion’. Hence Siddhanta means “established end, final end...settled opinion or doctrine” (p. 35). The word “‘Saiva’ refers to those Hindus or the Hindu schools who use the name ‘Siva’ for the Ultimate Being or God. Therefore, ‘Saiva Siddhanta’ means “the established philosophies of the worshippers of Siva” (p. 36).

However, Saiva Siddhanta is not one monolithic philosophical system. The origin of Saivism is dated at 2000 BCE or earlier. There are several sects of Siva worshippers who differ from one another in their religious practices and doctrines. “Saiva Siddhanta, then, can refer to virtually all the Saivite sects and their philosophies. But traditionally the term has come to designate the religious and philosophical thought of the Saivites in Tamilnadu, with special

reference to the writings known as *Meykanta Sattiram* ('the treatises that have seen the truth')" (p. 36). Thangaraj prefers to use the term 'Saiva Siddhanta' as a synonym for Tamil Saivism. In Saiva Siddhanta the idea/concept of guru is shaped by the concept of God (*pati*), soul (*pasu*) and bondage (*pasam*). The Tamil equivalents of *pati*, *pasu* and *pasam* are *irai*, *uyir* and *talai* (p. 40). Sivam is the Saivaite term that denotes God. Sivam is the creator and hence Sivam is not part of creation. However, this does not suggest the wholly otherness and transcendence of Sivam for Sivam pervades everything and assumes any form and be accessible to created beings. Saiva Siddhanta does not include the *avatar* concept in its understanding of Sivam. Sivam is apart from the material world and cannot be within material processes. Sivam is formless, immutable and eternal. Sivam cannot go through the process of birth, growth and death. Further, the two concepts *anpu* (love) and *arul* (grace) have to be understood along with the concept of God. The five functions of Sivam are creation, conservation, destruction, obscuration and granting of grace. "God's grace is to help souls free themselves from their bondage; hence it is always a saving grace" (p. 43).

The most important point is that "Sivam is the creator, sustainer or destroyer, all because Sivam is the savior" (p. 43). Hence, it is important to understand the nature of the soul and its bondage. The soul is qualitatively different from the body. The body is dependent on the soul for its life, activity and knowledge whereas the soul is non-material, eternal yet distinct from God. The relationship between the soul and God is non-dual, advaita. "This relation between the soul and God is an eternal one. Though eternal, it does not include final bliss or complete happiness, because the soul is also in a predicament; namely, it is in bondage" (p. 45). Since the soul is in bondage, it cannot experience bliss and union with Sivam. The soul is associated

with three impurities namely *anavam* (egocentricity), *karma* (action–result complex) and *maya* (matter). Hence, the soul is in need of salvation.

Thangaraj enumerates four salient features of salvation in Saiva Siddhanta:

First, salvation is not a static event but a work in progress. Both *Meykanta Sattiram* and *Tattuvakkattalai* refer to the various stages through which the soul must travel before it reaches the feet of Sivam, that is, before it attains final bliss. Second, the tradition repeatedly emphasizes the total inability of the soul to save itself by its own efforts. It is Sivam and Sivam alone who can save souls from their bondage. Third, souls are of different kinds according to the intensity of their bondage. The first group of souls is called *vinnanakalar*, that is, those who have only one impurity, namely, *anavam*. These are souls that are not yet connected to a body. The second group is *piralayakalar*, those who have two impurities, *anavam* and *karma*. These are souls who belong to the period of destruction or deluge and are not yet united with *maya*. The third group called *sakalar*, includes all living human beings who are bound by all the three impurities. To each of these groups Sivam has a distinctive way of granting salvation. Finally, the primary emphasis is on the salvation of *souls* and not on that of humans, other creatures, or the world (p. 46).

Thangaraj explains that the concept of guru has to be situated within this idea of salvation of souls. In Saiva Siddhanta a guru is a spiritual teacher or *acariyan*. He is *ariyan* or *antan* (honourable man or sage) and *natan* or *aran* (lord). He points out some features common to all the religious traditions in India with respect to guru. First, a guru is a human being. His

historical humanity is affirmed. Second, a guru is a person who has an intimate relationship with God. “Somehow the guru represents God, or God is seen to act through the guru. Some may consider the guru as an incarnation of God. Therefore, the concept of guru is always theological” (p. 47). Third, there is a link between the idea of salvation and the idea of guru or, in other words, the guru concept is soteriological. The guru assists other human beings in the process of salvation or freedom from bondage. (p. 47).

In Saiva Siddhanta philosophy, particularly in *Tirumantiram*, salvation or *telivu* is possible only through a guru. “Telivu is possible only through seeing, hearing and meditating on the guru” (p. 48). The guru removes “the impurities that bind the soul and helps the soul escape the cycle of births. These functions are carried on by the guru’s look, the guru’s words, or the guru’s very appearance. The disciple appropriates them by listening, chanting, meditating upon, and worshiping the guru, because the guru is Sivam in human form” (p. 49).

Manikkavacakar in his *Tiruvacakam* speaks about the idea of guru in three ways. “First, guru is connected with particular shrines,” second guru is “the human appearance of Sivam” and third “the inward activity of the guru” (p. 50). There is an idea that God is taking possession of human beings (*atkollal*) and making them God’s own. Here Sivam is understood to be an interior guru.

At this point Thangaraj asks a question: “if one accepts the full humanity of the guru, what does it mean to say that Sivam comes in the form of a guru?” (p. 51). He says that the answer from the Saivite philosophers can be stated as follows: “(1) that only Sivam can save souls and (2) that souls can recognize and appropriate salvation only through a human

being. These two necessities justify God's coming as a guru. The person of the guru is understood in purely functional terms" (p. 52).

However, in Saiva Siddhanta, since the *avatar* concept is denied, various phrases such as 'Siva who came with a holy body', 'wearing the garment of humanity' are used to explain God's coming as a *guru*. And the phrase 'graciously rising' (*eluntaruli*) is used to speak about Sivam's gracious saving act. "Sivam graciously rises as the savior and frees the soul from bondage. This language is opposed to the *avatar* language that talks of God as coming down from above". Further, the guru is also seen as the embodiment of divine grace. "... It is God's grace or *arulsatti* that takes flesh in the guru." Thangaraj comments, "This seems to solve the problem of how the formless one could take form as a guru. It is not Sivam in Sivaself but Sivam's grace that is now seen in the guru" (p. 53).

Thangaraj explains how Sivam appears as guru to the three groups of souls that we mentioned above.

To the *vinnanakalar*, Sivam appears in the first person as 'I'. This means that they can look inward within themselves and come to know Sivam. To the *piralayakalar* Sivam appears in the second person as 'Thou', in the glorious divine form of a guru, as in a theophany. To the *sakalar*, Sivam appears in the third person as the 'He' behind the 'Thou'. So when the disciple looks at the guru, outwardly the human guru is the 'Thou' whom the disciple meets. But the 'He' behind the 'Thou' is Sivam. Sivam stands hidden behind the guru ... (p. 53).

The *vinnanakalars* understands Sivam as guru who enlightens their inner being.

Piralayakalars understand Sivam in theophanic manifestations and for the *sakalars* the guru functions as Sivam. For *sakalars* the guru is “teacher–initiator–savior” (p. 58). Thangaraj points out that here one encounters a functional aspect of the guru rather than an explanation of the guru’s nature in relation to Sivam. “This means that what the guru does for the disciple is far more important than what or who the guru is” (p. 56).

Now, considering the Christological use of guru in some of the Tamil Christian poets such as Krishna Pillai, Vedanayagam Sastriar, Marian Upatesiyar and the Reverend Devasagayam, Thangaraj remarks that in their songs, hymns and poems, “the poets are not necessarily using the concept of guru as it is explicated in the reflective tradition within Saivism; rather, they are guided by the popular use of the word ‘guru’” (p. 64). Thangaraj points out that in their writings, “There is no specific reference to the teaching role of Jesus, and hence the particular significance of ‘guru’ is lost so to speak in the multitude of titles” (p. 62). The title guru is used to complement the *avatar* concept. M. Vedamanickam in his songs calls Jesus *avatara* of God and the Holy Spirit the divine teacher. Also, in Tamil Christian hymns, pastors and priests are referred to as gurus. Further, on examining some of the Tamil evangelistic tracts, Thangaraj comments that they offer invitations to turn away from false gurus that are found in Hinduism and turn to the true guru Jesus.

Thangaraj also shows that the title ‘teacher’ is present in some of Hindu thinkers such as Rammohan Roy and Mahatma Gandhi. Both of these were much drawn towards Jesus’ teachings. Roy describes Jesus as the divine teacher. Gandhi calls Jesus a ‘great teacher of humanity’ (p. 71).

Thangaraj's study of the title guru extends to Christian theologians. He observes that this title is used for Christ by a number of Indian Christian theologians. He briefly states the view of different theologians:

Roberto De Nobili describes Jesus as divine guru. Christ is *tivviya guru* (divine guru), *sarguru* (true guru), *tevaguru* (God-guru), and so on. Thangaraj comments that De Nobili used these titles to explicate the significance of Jesus.

A. J. Appasamy considers the title 'guru' as a good starting point for Christology. Jesus as guru fulfils all the nine qualifications of guru that are stated in *Nannul*, an early Tamil grammar book, namely good ancestry, Love of humanity, knowledge of God, possession of dignity, clearness of thought, gift of speech, power of consistency, understanding of world's ways, and lofty character. However, in Appasamy's view, these nine qualities are not adequate to express the significance of the person and work of Christ. Jesus is far superior to other gurus and he is much more than a guru in his unique relationship with God. Appasamy argues that the Saivaite concept of guru is docetic and criticises Saivaite resistance to the idea of *avatar*. Appasamy says, if God is love, as Saivaites believe, then God's love must be shown forth in action even to the extent of God becoming human in order to save humanity.

Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya describes Jesus as 'Teacher Universal'. Nevertheless, "Upadhyaya's Christology operates mainly with the idea of Christ as the incarnate Logos, even though he uses the concept of guru as a starting point. ... Thus Upadhyaya's use of the

guru concept is marginal, and different from the Saiva Siddhanta concept of guru, which functions as an alternative to the idea of incarnation.” (p. 79).

Chakkarai rejects the concept of guru as unsuitable for Christological reflection since in Saiva Siddhanta the guru is a mere appearance of Siva in human form. Thangaraj comments that “Chakkarai’s understanding of the Saiva Siddhanta concept of guru is largely informed by the narrative tradition within Tamil Saivism; he does not explore the Saivite philosophical writings. Such an exploration might have given him a positive appreciation of the Christological possibilities in the concept of guru” (pp. 76-77).

For J. B. Chettimattam, guru is to be understood as a presence. He finds “Christ as the one guru who is ‘God’s decisive, eschatological, and soteriological presence to the individual’” (p. 80). Thangaraj comments that by this Chettimattam emphasises Christ’s interior presence.

Thangaraj mentions that, although Swami Abhishiktānanda wrote a book entitled *Guru and Disciple*, he does not seem to explicate the concept of guru in reference to Jesus and this title does not occur as a dominant theme in his Christology.

Thangaraj observes that in these Indian thinkers, the title guru serves as a starting point; it complements the *avatar* concept but does not seem to serve as a viable Christological model. They do not explore the concept in Saiva Siddhanta to the fullest extent and work with a partial understanding of the term.

He thinks that among Indian theologians Xavier Irudhayaraj is one who brings out the functional and metaphysical implications of the concept of guru for Christology. In Irudhayaraj's view,

First, the relational character of the *guru-sisya* model can bring out the idea of Christ as 'the sacrament of every *Guru-Sisya* dialogue'. Second, Jesus, seen as guru, is both mediator and revealer of our divine sonship. Third, this kind of Christology, though rooted in the personal and the individual, has potential for the 'inter-personal as well.' 'Since according to Saiva Siddhanta all gurus are manifestations of Siva, there is among all the *sisyas* a basic community of experience.' Fourth, the idea of Christian fellowship can be seen as 'the fruit of discipleship' (p. 81).

With this exception, in Thangaraj's view, the Indian Christian theologians largely attempt to employ the title guru for Jesus working within a classical Christological model. According to Thangaraj, it is not a mere translation but a creative dialogue between Hindu and Christian traditions that is needed. He says, that "any creative use of guru involves a two-way traffic between the concept of guru in Saiva Siddhanta and the traditional Christology, each informing and shaping the other" (p. 88).

For Thangaraj the title 'guru' "functions as the overriding and guiding model" around which Christology can be discussed. He argues that guru "is comprehensive enough to accommodate the various theological and soteriological concerns implied in avatar" (p. 90). His theological task is threefold: Firstly, he attempts to show what the significance of Christ will be if we apply this title to Christ. Secondly, he shows how the significance of Jesus as guru converges

with the concept of guru in Saivaite tradition and thirdly he discusses the future possibilities for constructing a full-fledged Christology with the use of this concept.

Jesus is a guru only because there is a disciple or *sisya*. Without a *sisya* there is no guru. Hence Thangaraj begins with Jesus' encounter with his disciples. It is a relationship of proximity; it is being with Jesus. According to Thangaraj, the opening up of the idea of the Christ-event as a web of guru-sisya relations enables us to understand "the significance of Christ in relation to the events, beliefs, and devotion surrounding and including Jesus, and not simply about the individual man Jesus" (p. 133). In Saiva Siddhanta philosophy the guru functions as God to the disciples. Jesus is not an *avatar*, Jesus is not identified with God but rather functions as God.

Incarnational language in its mythical form gets trapped repeatedly in a discussion about the 'stuff' of which Jesus is made. A vision of Jesus as the guru does not raise the question of the constitution of Jesus' personality. He is a human being; yet the disciples see him functioning as God to them in what he does and teaches. Thus the guru's presence makes God's presence real to the disciples (p. 94).

Jesus as guru was a teacher (Mt 4:23; 9:35; 11:1; Mk 2:13; 4:1; 6:34; Lk 4:15; 4:31; 6:6; 13:10; 19:47; 20:1; 21:37). The teaching took place in public and he taught all kinds and all classes of people. Jesus taught with authority. His authority was derived from his "unique relationship to God and his own identification with those whom he taught." Jesus did what he taught; his life was one of "enacted words" (p. 96).

The three verities of Saiva Siddhanta namely, *pati*, *pasu* and *pasam* are summed up in Jesus' teaching on the reign of God (Mk 1:14-15). Jesus brings mercy, compassion, forgiveness, justice and a new kind of relationships. His appeal is not limited to words alone but "as Saiva Siddhanta portrays, the guru effects changes in the lives of the disciples by his touch and by his look" (p. 98). Thus, Jesus by his touch and look brings healing and wholeness to people.

Jesus the guru faces death on the cross.

By his powerlessness on the cross, the guru gives a fresh and novel understanding of wherein lay true power – the power of love and self-sacrifice. On the cross the guru is no longer seen as a mere pointer to the way of liberated existence, but he himself can now be seen as 'the way, the truth and the life'." Here we see the fullest revelation of the reign of God. The cross reveals "a reign of love and justice and of God's judgment and mercy." Jesus as crucified guru "appears as the guru par excellence. (p. 101).

The cross is followed by the resurrection, ascension and giving of the Spirit of Jesus to the disciples. "Jesus the guru was no longer available to the disciples as a physical presence among them. Yet he was very much present among them as the Spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit" (p. 101). At this point, the discourse about Jesus as teacher shifts to the discourse about Holy Spirit as teacher. The Holy Spirit as the teacher of truth does not contradict the human guru but rather enhances and goes beyond the role of Jesus the human guru.

The resurrection, ascension and the granting of the Spirit raises Jesus to a level that transcends the local, history, space and time. "He was raised by a level where he could demand adoration

and loyalty from all peoples in all places” (p. 102). It is in this light that John 1:1-18, where we find the idea of *Logos* taking flesh and becoming a universal creative principle of God, and Paul’s words as stated in Col 1:15-17 that Jesus ‘is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation...He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together’ become relevant, significant and meaningful.

Drawing from Saiva Siddhanta, Thangaraj states,

A guru gains his significance, if any at all, only in the context of the guru-sisya relation. The salvific efficacy of a guru is not an objective reality as such; rather, it is dependent on the imaginative vision of those who come to recognize him as a guru. ... Even when the disciples of Jesus raise him to a level of universality on the basis of the events linked to his resurrection, it is they who do so; the universal significance of Jesus is dependent on their vision. Thus the universal significance of Jesus is not an objective empirical reality that can be verified and established through a process of collecting empirical evidences (p. 102).

The two sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist recommended by Jesus take on a new meaning after the resurrection. They are now community acts rather than symbolic acts performed by the guru for his disciples. “The guru’s presence hereafter can only be maintained by the life of the community of disciples” (p. 103). Thus Thangaraj maintains that after resurrection the human guru becomes a spiritual presence in the community.

Thangaraj also points out the differences between the portrait of Jesus as guru and the Saivite vision of the guru. Jesus' disciples form a community around the Eucharistic table. Jesus' teaching takes place to a group of people and thus has a public character, although it is not devoid of one-to-one relationship between Jesus and his disciples. Jesus' teachings about the Kingdom of God encompass the categories of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy such as *pati*, *pasu* and *pasam*, that is God, soul and bondage, but Jesus' teachings are different in content from Saivite teachings. The cross and the resurrection of Jesus point to his distinctiveness.

Thangaraj thinks that the aspects peculiar to the portrait of Jesus as guru will function as correctives to the Saiva Siddhanta concept of guru. For example, "the vision of a crucified guru offers a critique of and a corrective to the possible authoritarian portrayal of guru" (p. 108). After resurrection, the human guru acquires a trans-temporal dimension, a feature that is not found in the Saiva Siddhanta concept of guru for in Saiva Siddhanta guru is understood as local and individual.

In Saiva Siddhanta priority is given to the soul over matter/body. Its preoccupation with the soul makes salvation spiritual. Guru Christology, on the other hand, sees liberation of the oppressed, marginalised and discriminated as part of the salvific process. Saiva Siddhanta "in spite of its professed protest against caste, ... does operate within the caste system and classifies humans further according to different stages in the salvation process. One's position in the caste hierarchy is often attributed to what one did in one's previous birth. The bhakti poets were articulate in challenging caste and themselves represented a wide range of positions in the caste structure" (pp. 113-114).

Further, “in its elaborate system of diksa, or initiatory process, Saiva Siddhanta legitimates the caste structure by prescribing different forms of initiation for different groups within the caste system. Women, children, and lower–caste people are either left out of the initiation process or prescribed inferior forms of initiation” (p. 114). But guru Christology challenges such hierarchy in the human community. It promotes a community of peace and justice. Thangaraj argues that Christology can be meaningful and relevant only when it brings out the liberative dimensions.

Thangaraj writes:

Guru Christology can help bring a creative synthesis of these two traditions in the figure of Jesus as a crucified guru. In relation to the Christian community, the vision of a guru who identifies with and suffers for the disciples can provide a great inspiration for raising the consciousness of the oppressed poor. The vision of guru as liberating can also provide the motivation and strength for meaningful involvement in the mobilization of the masses in India. Moreover, those Christians and Saivites who are working to mobilize the poor can draw orientation and strength from the vision of Jesus as the guru. Jesus’ praxis–oriented and people–centred pedagogy is a good model to adopt in the process of consciousness–raising (p. 120).

Thus he shows how guru Christology can bring in a creative dialogue between Hindu and Christian traditions. Both the understanding of guru and of Jesus are enriched and transformed. We shall now enumerate the prospects for guru Christology in relation to Spirit Christology. At several points guru Christology and Spirit Christology can correlate:

Thangaraj brings to the fore what is already present in the Christian tradition, namely the *didaskalos* (teacher or guru) tradition. He argues that when *Logos* Christology assumed the centre of the stage the idea of *didaskalos* did not have the opportunity to flourish as a distinctive model of Christology. If we look back to our study of Spirit Christology, we may recall a similar lament among the Spirit Christologists about Spirit Christology.

Thangaraj rightly argues that traditional Christology confined itself to dogmas and metaphysical substances. He affirms that guru Christology is much more open and dynamic since it “opens up the idea of the Christ–event as the whole web of guru–sisya relations, and thus enables the continued use of incarnational language within a broader understanding of the symbol ‘Christ’” (p. 132). This is a valid contribution since by interpreting Christ–event in the framework of guru–sisya relationship he proposes a Christology of relationship. This strikes a chord with the Spirit Christologists who wish to see Christ–in–relation over and against Christ as an individual.

Further, after resurrection, the human Jesus becomes a spiritual presence in the community. After resurrection, the two sacraments Baptism and the Eucharist take on a new significance. It is no longer symbolic acts or merely a one–to–one communication but a community dimension, which comes to the fore. Christology gains a corporate dimension, which is one of the emphases of Spirit Christology. Once again we can see parallels between guru Christology and Spirit Christology.

Thangaraj highlights a vision of a crucified and risen Jesus that includes the community of disciples and such a vision has a practical value for him. It enables us to envisage a more

humane and just community. It liberates women and affirms the status of women in religion and society. In the classical Christology “the significance of Christ was limited to the individual man Jesus, the maleness of Jesus became a normative category for discussing the salvation that is made possible in Christ and for understanding the normatively human” (p. 132). Hence, the widening of the Christ–event is necessary to bring about the transformation of communities. Like Thangaraj, the Spirit Christologists envisage a humane community that is liberated from all kinds of hierarchy. This is possible for them if Christology is seen in association with pneumatology. Thangaraj focuses on a guru–sisya model, which is communitarian. However, this community dimension itself is pneumatological in the view of Spirit Christologists since the Spirit is a ‘go–between’ or ‘a point of contact’, whether we speak about a relationship between guru and sisya or a broader community.

Thangaraj argues that his guru Christology is a functional Christology over against the substantial Christology of the early Church. He writes, “Substantialist language has a built–in tendency to equate Jesus with God. But the functional approach of guru Christology can help one to move out of such substantialist categories. A functional approach shifts the emphasis from what happens to God to what happens to the believer. Thus guru Christology is able to protect one from equating Jesus, simply and straightforwardly, with God, and thus from engaging in christolatry. It is able to do this much more rigorously than some of the more traditional Christological formulations” (p. 121). However, by praising the functional approach and condemning christolatry does he not propose a subordinationist Christology? Moreover, he claims that “the difference between Jesus and other gurus is not in kind or in degree but in pragmatic value. One can affirm the finality of Christ only in terms of its contributions to a set of values that lead to the practical consequence of building a more

humane and just society” (p. 125). This seems to suggest a pragmatic Christology devoid of any metaphysical curiosity.

Nevertheless, we must admit that Thangaraj’s guru Christology is not bereft of a notion of pre-existence although he takes the historical Jesus as the central point of reference. It is possible to see in guru Christology, the Christology from below and the Christology from above as a whole like the Spirit Christologists (the complementary approach). Thangaraj says once the guru-sisya relationship is established between Jesus and his disciples, the disciples tend to go beyond the immediate relationship to the pre-existence of Jesus and thus the prologue to the Fourth Gospel has a place in guru Christology. The universal significance of the human guru depends on the imaginative vision of the disciples. This gives a new framework for thinking about the pre-existence of Jesus, that is, the guru-sisya relationship. This is a valid contribution of guru Christology to Spirit Christology.

Further, like the Spirit Christologists, Thangaraj sees the connection between cross and resurrection, resurrection and ascension, relationship between the Spirit and Christ. There is an emphasis on Christological pneumatology without an emphasis on pneumatological Christology. In other words, he connects incarnation and resurrection but does not see incarnation as the pneumatological event. Jesus the guru was himself filled with the Spirit, the guru-sisya relationship happens in the Spirit, Jesus the guru acted in the authority of the Spirit and could lead all others to the way of salvation in the power of the Spirit – had he emphasised these points equally he would have seen the mutuality of Christological pneumatology and pneumatological Christology. However, the way he associates the Spirit and Christ (for example, after resurrection, Jesus the guru becomes a Spiritual presence, the Spirit enhances

the human Jesus, going beyond Jesus yet without contradicting Jesus) gives ample space for Spirit Christology and guru Christology to coincide.

Again, the whole idea of interior guru coincides with the idea of *antaryamin*. Like *antaryamin*, the inner dweller and inner controller, the guru is active in every soul as an inner being or interior guru. This emphasises the spiritual presence of the guru. Further, as we have shown in our study of Spirit Christology, the concept of *antaryamin* has implications for a just and humane community. The *guru-sisya* model that focuses on community can correlate with the concept of *antaryamin* and thus has great potential to reform human community and ecclesiology.

Our next book on *Vedic Sacrifice* by Israel Selvanayagam enriches the idea of interiority with sacrificial consciousness and we shall move on to this theme of sacrifice in the next section.

Appendix III

Spirit Christology and Sacrificial Consciousness

Israel Selvanayagam's *Vedic Sacrifice: Challenge and Response* is a very intriguing and scholarly work on sacrifice, which is a cardinal element of Vedic tradition. David C. Scott's excellent foreword to this work offers the reader a historical survey of the theme of sacrifice in the history of Hindu philosophy and thus serves as a good introduction to the loaded and stimulating contents of this book. Selvanayagam examines the understanding of *yajña* in Vedic tradition and investigates the changes and developments of *yajña* in the post-Vedic period. He adopts a historical-hermeneutical approach for this study. It is an elaborate study on the theme of sacrifice. We shall not summarise all the arguments and findings of this book in this section. We shall only consider the points that are relevant to the focus of our study of Spirit Christology.

The term *yajña* means sacrifice. Sacrifice was the heart and essence of Vedic tradition. It was the central feature and core vision of this tradition. Selvanayagam writes, "Sacrifice (*yajña*) is so central to Vedic religion that the Vedic Aryans may be called 'people of sacrifice'. It is the 'ruling image of the Vedic texts and Vedic life'. Life in the Vedic home and society centred around the performance of sacrifice" (p. 53).

In Vedic tradition, sacrifice is not merely the activity of the priests or a simple act of offering food to the deities but it is also the fundamental category that explains the origin and sustenance of the cosmos and the human self. Thus, it plays an epistemological function in

Vedic tradition. In David Scott's view, sacrifice is the central category to understanding both Vedic cosmology and Vedic anthropology.

Scott further says,

It might well appear that, in all of this, sacrifice functions as a metaphor in Indian religious discourse, but it could equally be said that from the Indian point of view other beliefs, actions, and phenomena are metaphors of the sacrifice. That is to say, it is quite as reasonable to regard *yajna* as a model *for* understanding other phenomena as it is to assume that it is only a model *of* other phenomena (p. 13).

The Vedic Aryans saw a hidden correspondence between the ritual acts performed during the sacrifice and the functioning of the cosmos. It was believed that the "sacrifice has its intrinsic potency to create and sustain the cosmos" and the sacrificers by cooperating with gods participated in upholding the universal order (pp.279-280). The outcome of sacrifice is "material abundance and happiness in this world and in heaven as well" (p. 91).

Certain dominant ideas such as *karman*, *brahman* and *tapas* in Hindu philosophy originated in the context of ritual *yajña*. *Karman* refers to the perfect ritual act. *Brahman* refers to holy power and utterance or prayer. And *tapas* refers to the ritual heat or holy fire produced by fire and cooking.

In the Upaniṣadic tradition, the process of interiorisation of *yajña* began. The ritual *yajña* is transformed into an understanding of interior *yajña* or *ātma yajña*. In the Upaniṣads, Brahman is the eternal, self-existent Reality, *karman* refers to action in general and it acquires ethical

connotation and *tapas* is understood to be self-generated or interior heat. It is the inner heat associated with ascetic life. It is the meditative fire or the contemplative power of the *ātman*. It is believed that since a human being is a microcosm, there is a new way of controlling the cosmic forces within, by means of the internal forces.

However, a move towards interiorisation can be seen within the Vedic tradition itself. For example, the *upanayana* or the initiation into Vedic society which also inaugurates *brahmacarya* (the study of Veda) is considered as a sacrifice. Further, “The conclusion of the period of Veda study is, as might well be expected, homologised with the conclusion of the Vedic sacrifice: the gift to the teacher presented by the departing student is specifically termed as *daksina* or sacrificial fee and the ceremonial bath at the end of *brahmacarya*, the *samavartana*, recalls the concluding bath of the sacrifice—the *avabhrtha*” (p. 16).

Thus, there was a close identification between the functions of ritual *yajña* and the functions of life. Even in-breathing, the expiration of in-breath and the consumption of daily meals were considered as inner sacrifice. In fact, life as a whole was considered as a “‘continuous’ and ‘uninterrupted’ *yajña*” (p. 16).

As we mentioned above, in the Upaniṣads, *tapas* is interior heat. However, this idea is not altogether new in the Upaniṣads for there are references to interior heat in the Vedic *yajña*.

Selvanayagam explains that, in the ritual *yajña* of Vedic tradition,

Tapas is creative heat that exists for ever. Some texts note that *tapas* was a primordial principle and the first-born in creation. It was the essence of gods and ṛṣis who gained

victory over *asuras* and attained immortality. *Tapas* is also the inner power in the *brahmācarin* by which he fills his guru and the whole world; it is also that by which a king protects his kingdom. A devotee of Agni can 'heat' his head with devotion and Brahmins 'heat' themselves before they go to kindle the fire (p. 86).

Further, in the Vedic religion there was space for *jñāna yajña* along with *karma yajña*.

... *yajña* could be performed either through knowledge (*jñāna*) or through action (*karman*). Through knowledge the wise go upwards and get their desire quenched. No sacrifice or ignorant penance can reach there; immortality is for the sacrificer who makes mental offerings. The self-offerer is better than the god-offerer; mental sacrifice is possible for securing spiritual power in which the senses (*indriya*) and the breath (*prāṇa*) are to be offered with the help of gods in sacrifice of mind (*manas*). One can perform an interior agnihotra for a life time. The study of the Veda (*svādhyāya*) is a sacrifice to Brahman, the cosmic spirit, with the tools of speech (*vāc*), mind, truth and the oblation of Vedic formulas which would lead to an imperishable heaven (pp. 86-87).

Selvanayagam observes that in the post-Vedic age the developments were not uniform and unilinear. New ideas challenged the old ones but they often incorporated the old ideas. Even in the Upaniṣads, although one can observe the emphasis on interiorisation, it does not eradicate the ritual *yajña* completely. For example, the study of Vedas was not absent in the Upaniṣadic period. "Praising gods and ritual may be a preparation for *ātma darśana*" (p. 110).

Selvanayagam observes an interaction of “ritual and material well-being on the one hand and interiorisation and renouncement on the other” in the Upaniṣads (p. 37).

However, there is a definitive shift in the Upaniṣads from the ritual *yajña* of Vedic worldview to the *yajña* of knowledge and self. This shows a new phase in the understanding of *yajña* in Brahmanism. Although in the Vedic age Brahman was presented in personal terms it was in the Upaniṣads that the emphasis that Brahman is “a super-personal, eternal, self-existent, unifying principle” became obvious. Brahman is “a macrocosmic reality whose microcosmic form may be identified with the individual soul (*ātman*)” and Brahman is the ultimate goal of *ātman*. “Brahman is the ultimate goal towards which all *ātman*s move through the path of knowledge” (p. 111).

The Upaniṣads interprets sacrifice in terms of interiorisation. It is ““the path of inner ascent, the inward journey by which the individual soul gets at the Ultimate Reality”” (pp. 114-15). Self-realisation, knowing one’s self in the Ultimate self, seeing Self in all self are the fundamental aspects of *ātma yajña*. “The universal self is not only the recipient of all forms of sacrifice but also the ultimate goal to be achieved by knowledge and self-realisation” (p. 115). The shift is from ritual sacrifice to self-sacrifice, “from external sacrifice to internal sacrifice, from objective to subjective perception” (pp. 114-15).

In the Upaniṣads, *brāhmaṇa* is the one who meditates upon Brahman the self-existent Reality. The Vedic priesthood is now replaced by gurus or spiritual teachers who are not confined to the priestly class. “The role of the guru is important to lead one from the empirical or lower knowledge (*apara-jñāna*) which includes the study of the Vedas, performance of sacrifice to

the supreme and the knowledge (*prajñāna*), by which the imperishable is directly perceived” (p. 109). Thus, the Upaniṣads include the old practices yet go beyond them and consider *ātma yajña* as a supreme sacrifice, which is the sacrifice of one’s own self to the Supreme Self.

Concerning the Gītā, Selvanayagam observes that the Gītā attempts to “synthesise different forms and meanings of *yajña*” (p. 29). The Gītā introduces some new forms of *yajña*. For example, it speaks about *jñāna yajña* (sacrifice of knowledge) and *japa yajña* (sacrifice of uttering sacred formulas) and considers them as superior to ritual *yajña* of Vedic age. It considers practices such as *dana* (giving gifts or alms), *tapas* (austere practice and *svādhyāya* (study of scriptures) as equally significant as ritual *yajña*.

Further, the Gītā teaches *tyaga*, the ‘giving up’ or renunciation, as a sacrifice. Hence it teaches *niṣkāma karma*, desireless action or action without any attachment to the fruits of the action as a sacrifice. According to the teachings of the Gītā ““this world is bound by the bonds of *karma* except where that action is done sacrificially.”” The Gītā also teaches *bhakti* as a form of ““true sacrifice”” (p. 17). Thus, the Gītā adds to interiorisation, “the element of love, of *bhakti* of personal involvement” (p. 209).

Like the Upaniṣads, the Gītā points to Brahman as the ultimate goal of all selves. It is described as “*śānti*, firm standing, supreme joy, absorption of the self into the self, freedom from *kāma* or *krodha* and having the senses subdued (2.50-72; 5.6, 7, 10, 12, 17, 18, 21-26; 6.27, 28)” (p. 251).

Selvanayagam points out “One outcome of this state of consciousness is equanimity or sameness. Thus, men of insight view with equal eye a Brahmin of knowledge and good

breeding, a cow, an elephant, and even a dog and an outcaste (5.18). In short, one is indifferent to all differences and opposites (6.8,9). But the implications of developing such mental attitude seem to support not the interior journey of the Upaniṣadic teachers but intense devotion and proper action” (p. 251). Thus, in the Gītā the Upaniṣadic *jñāna yajña* is made subservient to intense devotion and proper action.

The interesting point in this discussion of *yajña* in the Vedic, Upaniṣadic periods and in the Bhagavad Gītā is that there are many shifts and developments in the understanding of sacrifice yet, in all these changes, the traditional intent is preserved and presented in a new form. Scott writes,

“... the purpose of shrouding new Hindu practices in sacrificial clothing is not simply to prove the superiority of the new to the old, but first and foremost to present the new *as* the old. Sacrifice has functioned throughout Indian religious history as a marker of a traditionalism and as a means of acceptable innovation” (p. 19).

The delicate balance between old and new makes *yajña* appear in many forms. In Hindu sectarian and devotional traditions, *yajña* is replaced by the ritual of *puja* to the image of Visnu, Siva, the Devi or one of their *avatars*. Now, the many rites of Vedic *yajña* are seen to be playing a subsidiary role within the principal rite, which is the service to the image.

Later on, even undertaking a pilgrimage would yield the same spiritual benefits of *yajña*.

“The mere appearance at one or another *tirtha* wins for the pilgrim ‘the fruit of a soma sacrifice’ or ‘the fruit of a horse sacrifice’” (p. 18). The results of *yajña*, which were available

only to the religious, economically and politically privileged elite class, can now be obtained by simple and ordinary people by their undertaking of some simple religious duties at a smaller expense (pp. 18-19). In all these, the old yajna is presented in a new way.

This foregoing discussion on *yajña* gives rise to five very important points to consider in relation to Spirit Christology. Firstly, it invites us to understand the Upaniṣads from the perspective of *yajña*. The *ātman-Brahman* reality that we elaborated in our study of Spirit Christology can be seen as *ātma yajña*. This leads us to interpret not merely the cross but also the whole of Christ's life within this sacrificial consciousness. Secondly, the presentation of new forms of *yajña*, yet still preserving the old or presenting the new as old, offers us a clue to understanding the Incarnation itself. The Christ-event, or the association of the Spirit with Christ, can occur in many ways, in different forms without losing the primordial intent. Thirdly, interpreting the Christ-event in the framework of sacrificial consciousness also enables us to link the historical and trans-historical dimension of Christ-event. Fourthly, the discussion concerning the discerning of the Spirit, can be seen in a new light within this *yajña*-oriented worldview, particularly with the hindsight that, in the history of Hindu thinking, the new *yajña* is often presented as old. Fifthly, the Upaniṣadic interiority or *ātma yajña* along with Gītā's additions (*bhakti*, undaunted devotion to God and love) to interiority make *ātma yajña* an active involvement rather than an abstract *jñāna yajña*. In short, a *yajña*-oriented worldview offers us a methodological framework to develop Spirit Christology in the Indian context.

Appendix IV

Figure 1: Śakti

Figure 2: Spirit in the cave of human heart

Figure 3: Ardhanariswara

Figure 4: Rangoli

Figure 5: Mandala

Figure 6: Yantra

Figure 7: Dancing Śiva

Figure 8: Indian Classical Dance

Figure 1



Sakti in this art is depicted in multiple colours. Green represents fertility. Blue the divinity, purple the majesty. Her body is orange signifying her power, strength and energy. The wing represents freedom, fertility, and all pervading divine. She is seated but her hands outstretched and with wing attached to her body represent both static and dynamic aspects of divine.

Figure 2



This art depicts the Spirit in the cave of human heart and inexpressible peace.

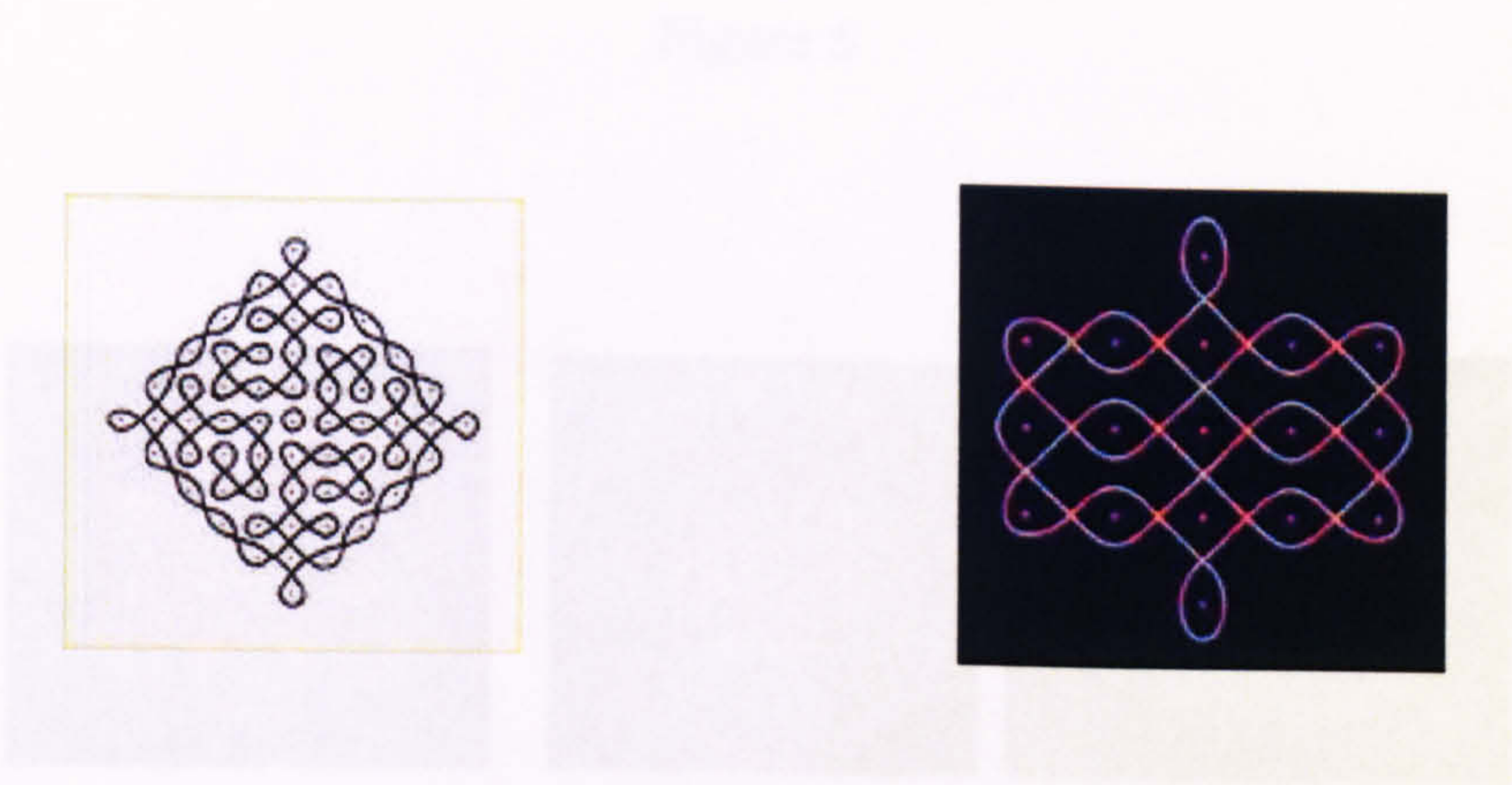
Figure 3



Ardhanariswara

Rangoli

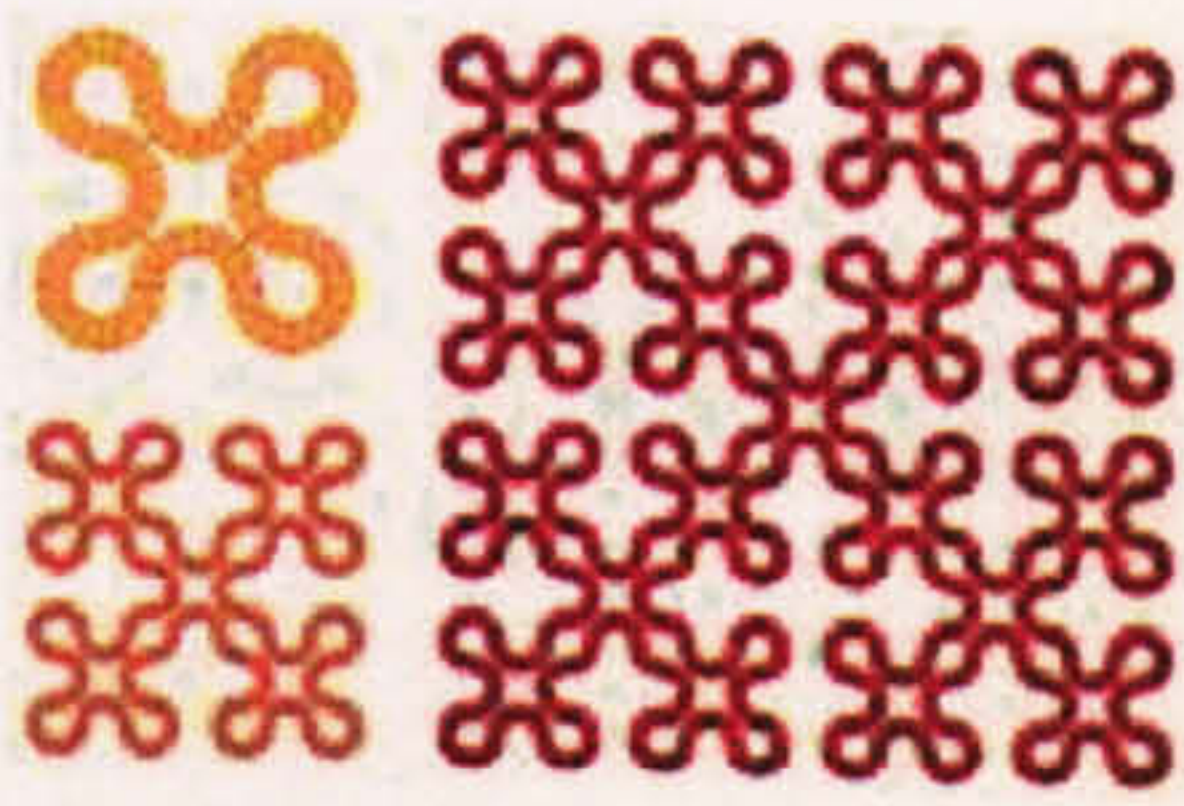
Figure 4



Mandala



Figure 6



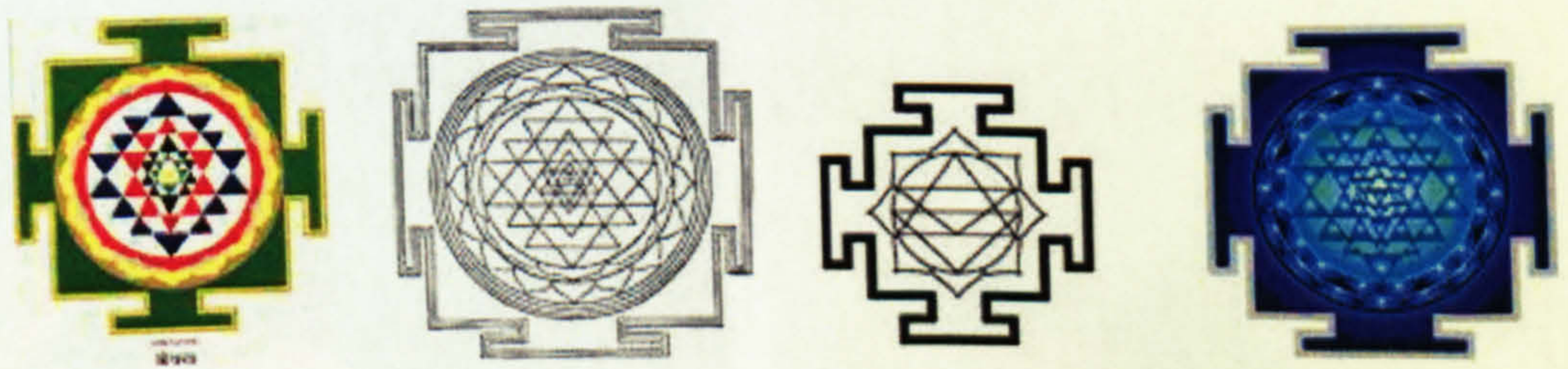
Rangoli

Figure 5



Mandala

Figure 6



Yantra

Figure 7



Dancing Shiva

Figure 8



Indian Classical Dance