A COMPARISON OF HP AND CP SYMBOL SYSTEMS

9.1. Introduction:

Chapters VII and VIII and some sections of other chapters have references to several symbols of HP and CP. We have analysed them on the basis of archetypal symbolisms (chapter VII) and looked at them on the basis of mandala symbolism (chapter VIII). In this chapter we try to group them together and see whether there is any common characteristic for these symbols of HP and CP. Our finding is that while the HP symbols are more feminine, spiral and earth-bound, the CP symbols are masculine, linear and sky-directed.

Our inquiry further extends to the description of east and west symbolism based on secondary data. We establish in this chapter that the Eastern symbol system shows more of the characteristics of HP symbols while the Western symbol system shows the characteristics of the CP symbol system.
9.1.1. HP and CP Symbol systems

The life HP and their theyyam myths and celebrations are rich with animal and plant symbolisms. To name some of the animals and birds are: serpent, elephant, boar, bull, goat, lion, gander, goose, horse, dragon, lizard, crocodiles, dog, buffalo, rat, tiger, monkey, pig, crabs, molluscs, snails, etc. And the trees and plants are: pipal, neem, kadamba, bilva, chambakam and kanjiram. for theyyam decorations and rituals, fruits, leaves and flowers of chetti, elengi and palm are used.

The world of inanimate beings too, becomes quite significant in theyyam symbolisms. As we have seen, clay, stone, metals gold and silver, brass and bronze are used to make statues and other holy objects. The divine objects made of Panchalokha (copper, tin, zinc, lead and gold) are highly auspicious.

According to legend, Othena Peruvannan of Kezhara said that Siva created different species simply by assuming their characteristic asanas or stance. Brahma also had a hand in creation, when he created, he concealed in each species a profound secret. For instance, the secret of eternity (anusvara) in the horse, the secret of longevity in the crow.
Gods use animals as vehicles (*vahana*). Buffalo is the vehicle of *Kali*, rat is the vehicle of *Ganapathi*, tiger, the vehicle of *Siva*, monkey, the vehicle of *Rama*, crocodile, the vehicle of goddess *Ganga*, pig, the vehicle of *Gauri* and rhinoceros is linked with folk deity.

The Peruvannan continued, crustaceans like crabs, molluscs and snails were considered unclean and generally killed by drying in the sun. But shell themselves are highly valued and put to variety of uses. There is hardly a ritual celebration in which shell is not used.

Bees are considered poetically as being eternally drunk, and *kama*, God of love, has a bow-string made of bees, which causes the sting's of love's passion. Fish is the first *avathara* of *Vishnu*. *Naga* is always venerated as we have seen, in *theyyam*. The lizard and chameleon are considered prophetic. Above all animals the cow is raised to the position of supreme sanctity. The bull also received veneration as a symbol of virility. Dogs are generally regarded as unclean, but worshipped in the *muthapan theyyam* (fig.4.1.4). Monkeys are treated as sacred, because they helped *Rama* in his adventure, the Peruvannan added.
Othena Peruvannan emphasised, the ability of birds to fly makes them the supreme messengers of deities, and their freedom to enter the heavenly spheres has given them access to truths hidden from mankind. Some of the birds used as symbols are: crow, peacock, parrot, owl, vulture, eagle, goose, swan. Several of gods have birds for their vehicle. Prominent in legend are the peacock, parrot, owl, eagle, goose.

In general animal and bird symbols are comparatively rare in the CP tradition. The Christian symbols show the following animals and birds used as symbols. The animals are: goat, fish, horse, nephthali, stag, ox, lion, wolf, serpent. Of those the last four the Ox represents, Joseph in the Old Testament, Lion signifies Juda, the Wolf represents the tribe of Benjamin and the serpent, the tribe of Dan. The birds are: Dove, eagle, peacock, pelican and butterfly.

The dove directly symbolizes Holy Spirit the third person of the Trinity. The Evangelists are symbolized by winged beasts: St. Mathew as winged man, St. Mark as winged Lion, St. Luke as winged Ox and St. John as Eagle. The Pelican represents Christ; Pelican has the habit of drawing blood from its own breast to feed its young. The butterfly emerging from its cocoon represents death, the
passing from this world to heaven. The eagle signifies insight and distance. "Animal symbols often used as expressions of abstract qualities of thought, feelings and action or as manifestation of process of being and becoming. Thus, for example, eagles may represent insight and distance from the material world, snakes may represent autochthony, and spiders, self-revelation and orderedness." (Encyclopedia of Religion (1987, Vol.1:292)

The distinguishing characteristic of Christian animal symbolism is the winged beasts. According to Zimmer (1963:93)

Wings, common in Western tradition, do not figure among the attributes of Indian gods or superhuman beings, except in the case of Garuda, the birdlike carrier of Vishnu. In general, the celestial beings of India either float through space without visible support or are carried by their vehicles. On the other hand, in ancient Mesopotamian art winged divinities or genii were the rule. This Indian figure betrays connection with that tradition. That is the sphere from which are derived the wings of our divinities of the West, the Greek victory-goddesses as well as the Christian angels.

The symbolism of the winged beasts and the attendant idea of transcendence is much in consonance with the Christian idea of God who is thought of high-up in the sky.

We have seen in the previous chapter that the plant symbols in the Christian tradition are comparatively less developed. Two reasons can be
indicated: first, ecological and second, theological. From the ecological point of view, the Jewish people always lived in arid regions where plants and forests rarely survived. Theologically, the chosen people were put in opposition to nature early in Jewish tradition and it directly influenced Christianity which is an offshoot of Judaism. The tree and plant used as symbols in Christianity are oak, date, palm, willow, deodar, pig tree, grapes, wheat etc. The willow is a symbol of mourning, rebirth, for the Jewish captives in Babylon hung harps on weeping willows along the banks of Euphrates (Ps. 137). The branches of palm tree stand for Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday as well as for rebirth. Christian death symbolism involves the use of willows and cedar trees. These trees symbolically stand for the death of the body as well as heralding a rebirth of the soul (Encyclopedia of Religion, 1987, Vol. 15:26).

Inanimate materials such as stone play an important role in Christian symbolism. Pillars and altars are raised with stones in memory of Yahweh's great deeds of mercy to the chosen people of God.

The predominant posture for prayer in the CP is kneeling and standing whereas for the HP it is dancing or sitting. The direction of movements of
these two are very clear, while the movement of CP are vertical the HP are horizontal.

For the CP the eyes (dhrsti) are directed upward during prayer whereas for the HP they are directed inward. While the CP address their prayers to the Father in Heaven, the HP pray to the Mother—Earth (Bhagavati).

While HP is concerned with seeing (drsam), the CP is obsessed with service.

The HP is interested in the stanaam, the place of worship, the CP is interested in liturgical seasons: kalam.

The HP worship includes moon which affects the high and low tides and thus their livelihood, the CP is concerned with the Sun, "the light of the world". Verbal communication is kept to a minimum in HP theyyam celebrations, when it is done it will be poetic and symbolic. The CP worship consists of mostly preaching and reciting the prayers.

In CP celebrations the peoples' participation is kept to a minimum whereas in HP celebrations the peoples' participation is ensured maximum by way of singing and dancing, to the rhythmic beating of percussion instruments.
HP celebrations are not very organized and time-bound, whereas CP celebrations are time-bound organized, and rigid.

In HP worship the priest (pujari) (fig.3.5.8) wears less clothes as he approaches the presence of the deity in the holy of holies (sannidana) whereas in CP worship, the priest puts on more and more clothes as he approaches the holy of holies.

The status of the theyyam is temporary in HP worship. The theyyam is worshiped till the headdress mudí is removed and after which he is just one among the crowd, in fact, he joins the crowd. The priesthood in CP is permanent, even after the worship the priest continues to keep his elite position in the community.

In the HP celebrations the true picture of life is reflected and in fact lived out, whereas in CP worship people are made to forget their real life and are taken through the experience of an unrealized paradise momentarily lived in the church.

In the HP worship every thing is symbolically acted out and danced though and thus left to the individual freedom to experience the divinity whereas in the CP worship even the boundaries of divine experience are determined by the officiating priest.
In the HP organization of sacred authority there is no absolute permanence, the main priest (tantri) in one kottam may be just a passive observer in another celebration and he is one with the people, whereas in the CP, the position in the priestly hierarchy once acquired is never given up — a bishop is a bishop till his death.

In the idea of the Almighty the HP doesn't subscribe to the idea of One Almighty God, there are several "Almighties", but one need not be mightier than the other always. The God who is mighty in one aspect need not be mighty in some other aspects. In CP tradition God is One and Mighty without a second and his power is supreme.

The deity is installed always under a symbol either known as trident or kannadithidambu thereby leaving a lot of space for imagination and personal freedom of worship. In the tradition of CP the God is very accurately and precisely installed in the form of statues and cross.

In the HP understanding of deities there are deities for all the nine rasas: love, mirth, compassion, heroism, wrath, fear, repugnance, wonder, peace, especially corresponding to the king of rasas, love. All the important deities are divine pairs — Siva - Parvati, Vishnu - Laksmi, Krishna - Radha. The God
of the CP is predominantly masculine and link-up to the feminine is done under the relationship of Mother and Son as against the realistic, life-oriented conception of divine-pairs.

Indian sculpture is equally at home in the treatment of the desires and passions of life in the larger background of human destiny as of the beyond human moods. The grand supra-mundane passions of righteous indignation and wrath, indeed, have nowhere been celebrated with such strength and vigour... The few western instances of the terrible, represented by Michael Angelo's painting of the Prince of Hell, Goyas's Saturn Devouring His children and Rodin's well known sculpture, the gate of Hell, pale into insignificance in contrast (Radhakamal Mukerjee, 1965:101).

In the worship of the HP, different ritual roles are played by different people, priesthood is just one among them and he is considered to be a technician enjoying a much inferior position in the community as that of a scholar, sanyasin, or a guru or a seer. In the CP set up, all these roles are combined, namely the priest, is everything - the sage, the seer, the scholar, the priest, the reformer, resulting in the absolute power of the priest and thereby crippling the movement of life sacred as well as secular.

The place of worship of HP is a grove (kavu) or kottam, in the shape of a tomb. The place of worship of CP is a concrete structure with conical shaped facade pointing to the sky, situated invariably on road-side away from the natural setting.
The colour that dominates the HP worship is red and yellow, the colour of earth, whereas the colour of CP is white and blue, the colour of sky.

Our description of CP and HP symbolisms is more lucidly expressed in the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindu Pulalya</th>
<th>Christian Pulaya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandala (Centre) (Yoni)</td>
<td>Mountain (vertical) (Lingam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth (immanent)</td>
<td>Sky (transcendent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon</td>
<td>Sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chthonic (animals)</td>
<td>Winged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serpent</td>
<td>Seven branched candle stick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhagavati (Mother-Goddess)</td>
<td>Father (God)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red (earth/blood)</td>
<td>White /blue (semen/sky)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiral</td>
<td>Linear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pot (Garbha)</td>
<td>Pillar (Linga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipal tree (Horizontal)</td>
<td>Cedars (Vertical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>Kneeling and Standing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye (darsan)</td>
<td>Hand (Service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanam (place)</td>
<td>Kalam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>Masculine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.1 THE PREDOMINANCE OF CIRCULAR PATTERNS IN
THEYYAM MAKE-UP

9.1.1. Poookuttichattan
9.1.2. Kandar Kelan
9.1.3. Angatheyyam
9.1.4. Wynattupulavan
9.1.5. Thi-chamundi
9.1.6. Pullikkurathi
9.1.7. Palottudeivam (Incarnation of fish)
9.1.8. Deivathar (Sriraman)
9.1.9. Angakaran

It is interesting to note that the head
dress of theyyams of Vaishnava tradition are
predominantly in the shape of a pillar whereas
the Saiva tradition, in the mandala pattern.
9.1.2. Introduction

In this section we deal with the differences of world-views in HP and CP. World view can be defined as the conscious or unconscious underlying assumptions of perceiving realities (Zaehner, 1959: ). Our assumption is that the world view of a culture is influenced by the symbol system of the subculture or culture. In the previous section we have seen that the symbol systems of HP and CP, are predominantly feminine and masculine and therefore differ in world-view.

We take insights from the secondary sources and describe the differences in emphasis of the world views of the two symbol systems: HP and CP.

Our second assumption is that HP share the world view of the East and the CP, that of the West.

The characteristics described below are: (1) Unity vs Duality (2) Reason vs Imagination (3) Personal vs Cosmic (4) History vs Myth (5) Discursive Reasoning vs Intuitive Experience (6) Beyond good and evil vs Between good and evil
9.1.2.1. Unity vs Duality

The East is said to be unitive while the West, dualistic. According to the gradation into which the Indian classifies phenomena, the One is at the apex of the pyramid, the many are its base, the union is hierarchically superior to division, the undifferentiated to the differentiated. Here we touch upon the unitariness of the East. Brahman is Nature exalted to an immensity which is undecipherable, because only a small fraction of Brahama is manifest, on the analogy of the tip of the ice-berg or the lava from the volcano. The rest is silence - Nada Brahman. (Lannoy, 1971:282)

From the beginning of history man has recognized behind all the phenomenon of nature and consciousness this hidden power, this enveloping cosmic whole. As he grew in the consciousness of himself and the things around him, he was able to distinguish the powers of nature, of earth and sky, of water and fire, the powers of the 'gods', from his own powers of speech and action, of thinking and feeling, and to know himself as a conscious being.

There is not a particle of matter in the universe, not a grain of sand, a leaf, a flower, not a single animal or human being, which has not its eternal being in that One, and which is not known in the unitive vision of the One. What we see is the reflection of all the beauty of creation through the mirror of our
senses and our imagination, extended in space and time. But there is the vision of the One all the multiplicity of creation is contained, not in the imperfection of its becoming but in the unity of its being. (Bede, 1983, 89, 92)

Speaking about the East and West Bede Griffiths (1983:57) says, the Western mind has split the world into two halves, conscious and unconscious, mind and matter, soul and body, and Western philosophy swings between the two extremes of materialism and idealism. This is due to a disease of the mind, a schizophrenia, which has developed in the west and since the Renaissance, when the unitive vision of the middle ages was lost. Jung echoes the same feelings in his own disciplinary jargon. Western man is held in thrall by the "ten thousand things"; he sees only particulars, he is ego-bound and thing-bound, and unaware of the deep root of all being. Eastern man, on the other hand, experiences the world of particulars, and even his own ego, like a dream; he is rooted essentially in the "Ground", which attracts him so powerfully that his relations with the world are relativized to a degree that is often incomprehensible to us (Jung, 1944:8).

The western concept refer to the relation of Matter and Mind; that is man and Brahman, or empirical reality and transcendental reality. However, the major element in Indian thought may be
characterized as a unitary, inclusive, concrete, and affirmative outlook (Lannoy, 1971:281-82).

Fritjof Capra (1975:19,20) tracing the history of the dualism says, the worldview of the subcultures that were the forerunners of the Greek philosophy was very close to that of ancient Indian and Chinese philosophy. "Heraclitus taught that all changes in the world arise from the dynamic and cyclic interplay of opposites and he saw any pair of opposites as a unity. This unit, which contains and transcends all opposing forces, he called the Logos". In the fifth century B.C. the Greek philosophers tried to overcome the differences between the views of Parmenides who expounded the theory of unchangeable Being with that of Heraclitus' view of eternal Becoming. This led to the concept of atom, the smallest unit of matter, and the distinction of matter and spirit.

These (atoms) were purely passive and intrinsically dead particles moving in the void. The cause of their motion was not explained, but was often associated with eternal forces which were assumed to be of spiritual origin and fundamentally different from matter. In subsequent centuries, this image became an essential element of Western thought, of the dualism between mind and matter, between body and soul. (Fritjof Capra, 1975:19,20)
9.1.2.2. Reason vs Imagination

It is thought that the west is more guided by reason while the east is influenced by imagination. "In India the intellect has never prevailed to the extent of obtaining itself there from and this of provoking that dangerous scission between the intellect and the psyche which is the cause of the distress from which the Eastern world suffers (Tucci, 1969:1). The writer and mystic Bede Griffiths (1983:103) speaks of the west almost in the same vein: "The western world has been dominated for centuries now by the 'analytical reason' manifested in the 'so called exact sciences', so that it is almost incapable of understanding the language of the imagination (Bede, 1982:103). Speaking about the Western and Eastern points of view the psychologist C.G. Jung (1962) says:

I have no wish to depreciate the tremendous differentiation of the Western intellect; compared with it the Eastern intellect must be described as childish (Naturally this has nothing to do with intelligence.) If we should succeed in elevating another, and possibly even a third psychic function to the dignified position accorded to the intellect, then the West might expect to surpass the East by a very great margin." (para.8).
It is difficult to deny the fact that West exaggerated the reasoning faculty of the mind to suppress the imaginative capabilities to the maximum possible. The experience of that which is beyond our senses was substituted by the exercise in talking about it and this process God was made to be a fact, "something there" to be dissected and experimented upon. "Had it been clear that theology was not speaking of facts, the conflict between theology and natural science could never have arisen. But when, during the era of the Renaissance, this conflict first arose neither the theologians nor the scientists realized that there might have been any profound difference between languages they were speaking (Watts, 1968:61).

Having established that there is a difference in emphasis on reason and imagination in the West and East let us look a little more in depth to attempt an explanation for it. From the modern research on the brain it has been concluded that the human brain is composed of two hemispheres which perform different functions practically independent of each other. (Bumber, 1979:49). The left hemisphere of the brain assimilates information in piece meal fashion, processes it in a linear way and communicates in a verbal and mathematical mode. The right half of the brain perceives in a holistic manner, in gestalts and
images. It is non-verbal in expression and processes information spatially in an intuitive manner, and functions as a locus of creative and artistic capabilities. "It might be simplistic, but not totally inaccurate, to say that the left brain specializes on language and logic, while the right brain specializes in intuition and insight" (Kattukaran, 1983:2).

For a long time in the past our understanding has been that the left-hemisphere of the brain controls the right side of the body and the right hemisphere, the left. But the modern researches have brought to light that both the hemispheres of the brain have different functions: left being more oriented to the reasoning capacity and the right more for the imaginative capabilities of human being. It is also the recent discovery that both hemispheres can have access to and can control the motor functions of the whole body and that, when one hemisphere is actually in command of it, the other is precluded from having access to it. Consequently, then, engaging left brain in motor functions seems to be a way of clearing the circuits for right-brain thought (Kattukaran, 1983:3). It may not be true to say that the brain hemispheres have autonomy in their functions. The integral functioning of the two halves of the brain is essential for creativity. That is to say, that it is not the right-brain alone which is
responsible for creativity. All the same, the right-brain has primacy in the imaginative thought process (Kattukaran, 1983:3).

According to Jung, the imaginative dimensions of human being emerges from the 'unconscious'. "Thus a word of an image is symbolic when it implies something more than its obvious and immediate meanings. It has a wider 'unconscious aspect that is never precisely defined or fully explained. Nor can one hope to define or explain it. As the mind explores the symbols, it is led to ideas that lie beyond the grasp of reason (Jung, 1964:20).

Bede Griffiths (1983:8) too repeats the same idea as he describes his first impression of India: "Whether sitting or standing or walking there was grace in all their movements and I felt that I was in the presence of a hidden power of nature. I explained it to myself by saying that these people were living from the 'unconscious'."

9.1.2.3. Personal vs Cosmic

In the western tradition God is more of an objective reality, who chooses a people out of all the peoples of the earth and enters into an eternal covenant with them. The covenant works itself out in history; God is dealing with his people here and now,
telling them what to do, legislating for them, encouraging them, chastising them, but leading them always on to their fulfilment at the end of time when there will be a new heaven and a new earth, and they shall be his people and he will be their God. God, in time, makes known his sovereign will through the prophet specially chosen by him. He commands the people to obey him but their failure to comply with his God is immense, there is nonetheless a close and direct relationship between the two. God must be worshipped as he commands, idolatry is not tolerated, because the God of the chosen people is a living God. In sum, the God of the West is a supreme ruler of the universe, its creator, sustainer and preserver. Zaehner (1959:17), Bede (1982:26), Leon Dufour (1967,181-82) etc. express the same opinion.

The Eastern idea of God is predominantly Cosmic. "Whether it looks at Man or his world, whether it looks at the Supreme Being or the ultimate cause, the perspective is invariably cosmic" (D'sa,1984). The doctrine of non-duality is found among primitive people in the world over, who have received it as an inheritance from their ancestors and have preserved it in their myths and symbols, their rites and ceremonies, their dance and song. It has been called the Cosmic Revelation, the revelation of
ultimate Truth, given to all mankind through the Cosmos, that is, through the creation. (Bede, 1982:88).

The Indian concern for the cosmos is rooted in the awareness that the world is, 'the body of God'. We find this explicitly expressed in Upanishadic teaching of the 'inner controller' and in the Gita's description of the 'transfigured' Krishna encompassing 'the whole wide universe' in his body. The universe thus experienced is entirely "pervaded by the lord" (Soares, u.d.).

In the Upanishadic teachings the eternal Being is recognized as a person. The Svetasvatara Upanishad, a comparatively late Upanishad, speaks of a devotion to a personal God. The concept of a personal God was further developed in the Bhagavad Gita, which was probably composed at about the same time as the Svetasvatara Upanishad. In the Bhagavad Gita Krishna is represented as the one Supreme Lord, the creator of all and Krishna like Siva is a God of love.

9.1.2.3.1. Cosmocentrism vs Anthropocentrism

Heimann conducted a systematic comparison of Indian (eastern) and European (Western) philosophy. The basic contrast which she drew is between the "Anthropological view dominant in Europe since the
Greek Sophists, and the "cosmic" view which has always prevailed in Indian thought. The anthropological view is that "man is the measure of all things": that man is differentiated from the nonhuman world and can grasp it intellectually. The cosmic view is one of identification of man with the universe (Heimann, 1937:14 quoted in Spratt, 1966:60).

The Eastern world view is said to be predominantly cosmocentric. Cosmocentrism is a by-product of the cosmic conception of the deity. Cosmocentrism means that the central category is cosmos; for understanding anything and anyone in this world-view one has to take the cosmos as the background. Man, for example, is unintelligible without the cosmos as the background, so too the Supreme Being. (D'Sa, 1984). The Indian world-view encompasses the whole cosmos rather than focusing on humankind alone. Humankind is experienced not as standing over and against nature and dominating it, but as rooted in the cosmos and integrally related to it.

God in the Cosmocentric vision is not an outside agent, he is the vibrating unity within the cosmos. That Cosmic Being is in the stone, in the waters, in the mountains, in the trees, in short, in all cosmic elements his presence is recognized. At some stages
in the growth of understanding of the deity, the cosmic elements themselves were invested with the divine power.

Anthropocentrism in the West is implicit in the historical personal God of the western understanding. In the anthropocentric world view Man is looked at in relation to God whose image he is. The cosmos, its destiny, its history, every created reality shrinks to one all-embracing process, the salvation history—the story of "God who created man and himself became man in order to redeem him". It is known in certain privileged moments of revelation which make a synthesis of man's varied behaviour in the course of hisroty. (Leon Dufour, 1967:288).

9.1.2.4. History vs Myth

At the time when it was thought that the West was historical, and the East mythical, the popular meaning of history was understood as the narration of actual facts and physical events. This was the meaning of history commonly applied to the biblical narrative. "For most Christians living in the eighteenth century, 'gospel truth' meant plain, unvarnished, historical fact.... The Bible was held to be throughout a historical record of events, knowledge of which had been vouchsafed to the writers by God himself. Because of the status of the Bible,
it was believed improper to make any comparisons between biblical and other literatures." (Fawcett, 1973:1). The nature of understanding of history was not very different in the scholarly circle too. History is thought of even today in opposition to myth. "Myth is supposed to be about the world of fantasy whereas historical consciousness belongs to the world of reality. The former is an imaginary world but the latter is the real world. This manner of speaking is not yet out of vogue." (Francis D'sa, 1984).

The historians today are more modest in their claims on their own discipline. "The belief in a hard core of historical facts existing objectively and independently of the interpretation of the historian is a preposterous fallacy, but one which is very hard to eradicate." (Carr, 1974 quoted in D'sa, 1984).

If the secular history itself is a 'mythical' interpretation of event, then sacred history tends to be influenced much more by the faith dimension (world-view) of the recorder. The sacred historian deals with 'facts' which cannot be empirically verified. The Bible is history, the record of events in the history of a particular people, which situated in the concrete historical circumstance of the time. This history is seen as a progressive
movement towards an 'end' an eschaton, when the full meaning of human history will be revealed. The interpretation of events in the light of a movement towards a direction, makes the history linear as opposed to spiral (Bede, 1982:76).

In the Hindu world-view history is understood as cyclic. It is based on a cyclic view of time. As in nature everything goes in cycles, the sun rises and sets, the moon waxes and wanes, spring is followed by summer and autumn and winter and then returns again, so in the Hindu myth man is born and dies and is born again; God descends as an avatara again and again, 'when the righteousness declines and unrighteousness prevails'; the world comes forth from Brahman and returns at the dissolution (pralaya) only to come forth again (Bede, 1983:175).

When East is said to be mythical, the understanding of myth is that it is a fanciful story out of the pre-logical, barbarous and immoral imaginations of a primitive mind (Fawcett, 1973:1, 14, 21). It was thought that myth belonged to the realm of fantasy whereas historical consciousness, to the world of reality. According to Mircea Eliade, in the language current during the nineteenth century a 'myth' meant anything that was opposed to "reality"; an infantile or aberrant creation of "primitive" humanity. According to
primitive Christianity, everything which could not be justified by reference to either of the two Testaments was untrue: it was a "fable". (Eliade, 1960:23).

The modern understanding of myth is that, it is the horizon of understanding the world-view. Whatever may be the world-view, there is a fundamental direction in the way one experiences the world. This direction belongs to the mythical level. "The mythical level is not what we know but what we know through .... It is mythical because it is beyond the level of categories. They are concerned with knowing about but the mythical level is concerned with knowing" (Panikkar, 1979 quoted in D'sa, 1984).

Myth operates at different levels of human interaction. First of all it has a basis either in nature or in history, that is, in the phenomenal world. It has secondly a psychological meaning, and application of human experience both individual and social. Thirdly, it has a spiritual meaning, reflecting some aspects of ultimate truth or reality (Bede, 1983:105).

Operating at the third level, by and large, the Hindu myths run down to other levels to shape the Hindu personality. With all the fancies and fantasies, 'barbarous' and 'immoral' imaginations the
myths continue to hold an irresistible appeal to the hearts of people. The great figures of the myth, Vishnu and Siva, and the great Mother, the Devi, Rama and Krishna, even lesser figures like Ganesh, the elephant god, and Hanuman, the monkey god, are all deeply significant. They are all symbols of ultimate realities. (Bede, 1983:73-74)

Coomaraswami (1956, 32, 33) also emphasizes the same point:

The Indian actor prepares for his performance by prayer. The Indian architect is often spoken of as visiting heaven and there making notes of the prevailing forms of architecture, which he imitates here below. All traditional architecture, in fact, follows a cosmic pattern... to have seen in his artefacts nothing but the things themselves, and in the myth a mere anecdote would have been a mortal sin, for this would have been the same to see in oneself nothing but the 'reasoning and mortal animal,' to recognize only 'this man,' and never the 'form of humanity.'

There can be no myth without a historical root and a history without a mythical interpretation of facts. The familiar dichotomy between myth and history is untenable, since the perspective of history is grounded in myth (D'sa, 1984).

9.1.2.5. Discursive Reasoning vs Intuitive Experience

The East is said to be experience oriented whereas the West is biased with discursive reasoning
in knowing the Ultimate reality. East in general and India in particular have formulated a philosophy in terms of the aesthetic component of things, and the development of religions and other cultural forms in terms of such philosophy. The East is distinct from the West in its conception of the nature of things and of the nature of the divine as essentially immediate, passionate and aesthetic in character. "In the East they insist that no reality exists except that which is immediately apprehended." (Northrop, 1946, quoted in Lannoy, 1971:281).

India never accepted the idea that man's logic and reason can give knowledge of the Absolute Reality. Discursive reason can give, "'knowledge' of the things sought for, but not the thing itself, since Absolute Reality transcends all pairs-of-opposites (dvandva)." This must be the reason why the Indian philosophical systems are known as darsanas. The root meaning of drs, is "to see", seeing with the mind's inner eye through a combination of perception, conception and intuition (Riencourt, 1961:109-110).

The eastern mystical experience is not an ephemeral affair, it can, be extended to long periods and ultimately, become a constant awareness. "The preparation of the mind for this awareness - for the immediate, nonconceptual awareness of reality - is the main purpose of all schools of Eastern mysticism..."
and of many aspects of the Eastern way of life." (Fritjof Capra, 1975:37,39).

The West is thought to be dominated by approaches that hinge on reasoning and logic in its approaches to the divine. As we have seen earlier, the Christian church developed its philosophy based on Greek thought, which is rational and logical. "The result of this was that the church became obsessed with the need to construct logical formulas and rational systems by which to express its faith. When these formulas or 'dogmas' came to be reinforced by the legal system of Rome, the Inquisition came into being, and the attempt was made to impose this doctrinal system by force." The reformation followed as a revolt against this rational approach and sought to set the church to return to the Bible, "but again the western mind introduced its logical formulas and legal systems and each church set itself up as alone professing the true faith." (Bede, 1983:198). In Christianity, faith is an objective reality, not a subjective experience as it is in the East, something to be believed and intellectually affirmed and which remains very much in the realm of intellect and will.

Jung (1970:709) too laments over the deplorable plight of the western mind and its refusal to come in contact with the deeper realities of life. He
says, "In general, meditation and contemplation have a bad reputation in the west. They are regarded as a particularly reprehensible form of idleness or as pathological narcissism. No one has time for self-knowledge or believes that it could serve any sensible purpose."

9.1.2.6. Beyond Good and Evil VS Between Good and Evil

While the west writhes in the all-pervading sense of sin, evil and good, the east appears to be quite relaxed about the notion of good and evil. The God of the East is beyond good and evil. "It has often been said that India has not developed on indigenous ethical system, that it has concentrated more on the mystical apprehension of an ultimate reality which transcends good and evil, than on differentiating between good and evil acts. (Lannoy, 1971:294). Jaimini, the earliest named authority, held that the soul is sinless, free from death and sorrow, omniscient and omnipotent (Keith, 1921, quoted in spratt, 1966:45).

Commenting on the importance of mandala, towards the realization of the Divine, Tucci (1969:8), says, "The Indians have not thought of life as a struggle between good and evil, between virtue and sin, but as an opposition between that Luminous consciousness and its opposite, the psyche, the
It is often said that in Hinduism ignorance (avidya) takes the place of sin in Christianity. "Though you are the worst of sinners, knowledge will enable you to overcome all sin" (Gita IV, 36 quoted in Spratt, 1966:55). Vyasa says, "The unison of intellect and mind and all the sense and the all-pervading soul is the highest kind of knowledge...one should try to obtain this knowledge by overcoming the five obstacle to yoga, namely, desire, anger, greed, fear, and sleep (Spratt, 1966:55). "The Indians had correctly seen that good and evil are always two relative terms of an unending dialectic process in which they constantly shift position." (Riencourt, 1961:90).

The western man is profoundly aware of his sinfulness, he is obsessed with his sinful inclinations that feeling of guilt is his alter-ego. Radhakrishnan was always ridiculing the western concepts that human beings are sinners (Spratt, 1966:53).

Yahweh in the Old Testament often displays fits of anger, the reason being sin. "Yahweh was seen more and more as a judge on sin, yet even in the great prophets, the judgement of God is seen falling without discrimination on whole nations and peoples.
and this concept is carried over even into the New Testament, especially in the Book of Revelation" (Bede, 1983:108).

Alan watts (1968:78) analyses the good and evil aspects of life personified in God and Satan:

This conflict is reflected in the irreconcilable war between God and Satan, where the absolutely righteous God is after all, the final mask of the Devil...The myth itself contains a number of strong hints as to the ultimate identity of God and Satan, but this is the one thing which the theological interpretation is not resolutely opposed — because it coincides with the special blind-spot of the western mind (Watts, 1968:78).

Generally speaking the church-rituals and its absence are either to avoid sin or to express remorse through penitential observances. The christian world view fails to recognize the existence of the 'pair of opposites' in life, and it blindly opts for the "joyful" side of life labelling the "dark" side as the product of sinful tendencies. The west has to come to terms with pair-of-opposites in life as good and human and at the same time divine or else it will have to live with the eternal guilt of sin.

From our enumeration of the symbols in the first section of this chapter and the distinguishing characteristics of East and West in the second section, it is clear that they can be reduced to a pair of symbols; Masculine and Feminine and a pair of
basic directions: Historic and Mythic. Though different authors follow varying divisions, it can be reduced to a pair of basic emphasis in world-view. Some of the authors we have discussed follow the following basic divisions: History and Myth (Panikkar, 1979; Francis Desa, 1984; Alan Watts, 1968; Fawcett, 1973), Anthropocentric and Cosmocentric (Heimann, 1937), Rational and Intuitive (Bede, 1983) Punitive and Narcissistic (Spratt, 1966), Prophetic and Mystic (Zaehner, 1959), Conscious and Unconscious (Jung, 1931).

We express the symbols and the basic characteristics together in the following chart:
CHARACTERISTICS

Unity
Imagination
Cosmic
Mythic
Intuitive

EAST

Bhagavati
Eye (darsan)
Dancing
Chthonic
Serpent
Pot
Pipal tree
Red (blood)
Spiral
Moon
Mandala
Stanam
Earth

WINGED

Father
Hand (service)
Kneeling/Standing
Seven branched
Candle stick
Pillar
Cedars
White/blue
(semen/sky)
Linear
Sun
Mountain
Kalam
Sky

Dualiry
Reason
Personal
Historic
Disursive

Masculine
Feminine