becomestatal in its forward movement with an inner magnetism.\textsuperscript{156} We may say that all the activities of the cosmic Christ prior to the incarnation are directed towards and are modelled after the event of Jesus. For this reason the activity of the pre-Christian cosmic Christ through the "seeds of the Word," is related to and fulfilled by the Christ as its goal.\textsuperscript{157}

The title cosmic Christ is applied to his risen, glorified state, where the cosmic Christ is precisely the risen Jesus who, through the resurrection, has entered into a pneumatic existence. In his resurrection, the last Adam was endowed with a "spiritual body" (soma pneumatikon) and became a life-giving Spirit (Pneuma zoopoiooun) cf. 1 Cor 15: 44-45). This means that through the resurrection the activity of Christ was so filled with and transformed by the Holy Spirit (spiritual body) that he actually became a life-giving Spirit, entered fully into the sphere of the Spirit, becoming the source of the Spirit. This pneumatic existence is a transhistorical and pan- cosmic existence which renders the risen Jesus present and active everywhere in the world, through his Spirit.\textsuperscript{158} Hence, while the pneumatic Christ is joined to Jesus Christ through a final revelation, the glorified cosmic Christ is identical with the risen Jesus who has entered into this glorious state. In both cases, the Christ is inseparable from the event of Christ in history.

In an attempt to dialogue with Hinduism, Panikkar is challenged by its ahistorical world-view. As he himself confesses, India is not easy to believe in a divine reality situated in space and time.\textsuperscript{159} He may add that, not only in India, but in Asia in general, religions and doctrines of salvation are based on timeless universal truths rather than on any particular historical event.\textsuperscript{160} The ultimate scan-


\textsuperscript{157} Cf. R. Smet, Essai sur la pensée de Raimundo Panikkar. Une contribution in-

\textsuperscript{158} Cf. R. Smet, Essai sur la pensée de Raimundo Panikkar. Une contribution in-

\textsuperscript{159} Cf. Smet, Gesù Cristo, 262-63.

\textsuperscript{160} The relationship between Jesus and the Spirit will be discussed in the following chapter.

\textsuperscript{161} An exception may be found in Mahayana Buddhism. Gautama is believed to be the incarnation of Buddha, equated with Dharma, the eternal truth. Cf. A. Pieris, "The Buddha and the Christ: Mediators of Liberation," in Hick and Knitter, eds., The Myth of Christian Uniqueness, 162-77.
particularity and, above all, the scandal of the incarnation. It is not utterly incoherent that a human person should sacrifice his life for his fellow human beings, but it is wholly beyond our comprehension that God should become man and die for us. The doctrine of the incarnation marks the real novelty of Christianity. It indicates the total commitment of God by entering fully into human history. Through the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ, the in itself ambivalent encounter between God and humanity finally reaches its definitive, irreversible summit. Hence, the incarnation has a once and for all character and is at the same time significant for all humanity for its relationship with God.

Long before our days, the early Fathers of the Church were confronted with the same problem when Christianity came into contact with Greek culture. The basic issue lay in the different concepts of time. The Judaeo-Christian concept of time is linear, while that of Hellenism is circular. According to the linear concept of time, one may speak of beginning (arche) and end (telos) and the various “kairoi” of divine providence. On the contrary, with the Greek concept of time human existence is experienced as enslavement within an eternal circular course and thus to be freed from time itself. For the Greeks, it would be impossible for redemption to take place through a divine action in the course of events in time. Rather, salvation is conceived in spatial terms. It means transferring from the actual world into a timeless Beyond. The possibility of this is thought to be always present in the form of some timeless mysticism. Thus, the outcome of the dialogue between Christianity and Hellenism depended largely on the choice of the concept of time. When the Judaeo-Christian concept of time as linear was abandoned in favour of a circular concept, the result was gnostic docetism. It did not only deny a real human body to Jesus; but its chief distinguishing mark, as aptly pointed out by O. Cullmann, was the denial of the redemptive significance of an event that occurred in time.163

In a similar way, by relaxing the indissoluble tie between the universal Christ and the concrete historical Jesus, Panikkar risked turning the Christian message into a kind of gnosticism. As a conse-

162. Cf. ibid. 55.
ence, observes J. Dupuis, one does not only arrive at the “Jesus myth,” but is led inevitably to a “Christ myth” as well, for a universal Christ detached from the historical Jesus can only be a myth. Hence, between the “myth of history” and the “Jesus myth” Christian faith has no choice. Perhaps it is precisely here that contemporary Christianity should make a contribution in its dialogue with Asian religions. The Judaeo-Christian linear view of history made an advance on the cyclical view of history as endless time. If their effort to introduce the Christian message into the Greek culture the early Fathers have enriched the latter with, among other things, the concept of time, can Christian theologians today not make a similar contribution to Asian religious cultures through this linear concept of history?

Reflecting on the eternal significance of the humanity of Jesus, Rahner says that people have the tendency to love the absolute and distrust what is particular, relative and contingent. But they should be reminded that “this conditioned reality is what is loved unconditionally by the Unconditioned.” Rahner firmly holds that the particular created reality of the humanity of Jesus has an eternal significance of mediation between God and humankind, even in the final state of consummation. The humanity of Jesus is the permanent openness and gateway to any genuine encounter with God even in the beatific vision when we contemplate God face to face: he who sees me sees the Father. Without the particular humanity of Jesus one may perhaps encounter the “impersonal absolute,” but not the personal God: “we may speak about the impersonal Absolute without the non-absolute flesh of the Son, but the personal Absolute can be truly found only in him, in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead in the earthly vessel of his humanity.”

MEDIATION BETWEEN PARTICULARITY AND UNIVERSALITY:
SPIRIT OF CHRIST

Now we come to the difficult question of the relationship between a concrete, particular historical event and its claim to uni-

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163. Cf. Dupuis, Gesù Cristo, 265.
165. Ibid. 43.
universal significance. The solution to this delicate problem, as proposed by W. Kasper, is to be sought in the Spirit of Christ. Kasper advocates a Spirit oriented christology: “a pneumatologically defined christology can in fact best convey the uniqueness of Jesus Christ and his universal significance”. After the Christ event has taken place, it is the special task of the Spirit to interiorize and universalize the mystery of Christ in the world and in history. It belongs to the working of the Holy Spirit to give Christ a universal presence in the hearts of human persons. The Spirit is the creative and vivifying presence of God in the world and in history. Jesus Christ is at once the goal of the presence and activity of the Spirit of God as well as the starting point for the eschatological mission of the Spirit. In Christ the Spirit has definitively reached his goal, namely a new humanity and new creation totally open to God. Now the function of the Spirit is to integrate the whole reality into that of Christ, or in other words, to universalize the event of Christ.

To demonstrate that the Spirit is from the outset the Spirit of Christ even prior to the coming of Jesus, Rahner thinks that the traditional formula “intuitu meritorum Christi” needs new interpretation. The fact that the universal imparting of the Spirit is in view of Christ should be explained, again, in terms of “final causality.” Based on the unity between the economic and immanent Trinity, Rahner presents the two basic modes of God’s self-communication in the history of salvation, through the Word and the Spirit. God communicates himself as offer and truth through the Word. In order that this self-communication may find response in human persons, God simultaneously bestows his Spirit as acceptance and love, for our response to grace is itself depending on the gift of God. These are the two inseparable basic modes of the one self-communication of God to the world.

This self-communication through offer and acceptance is always carried out by means of historical mediation. Owing to the freedom

of the two partners in dialogue, i.e. God and human persons, this story may go on without ever reaching a definitive climax. From Christian revelation we come to know that in the incarnation, the paschal mystery of Christ, the history of God’s self-communication has definitively reached an irreversible and historically possible summit. In the Christ event the highest self-communication of God through the Word has been perfectly accepted by a human being through the action of the Spirit. Thus the Christ event can be viewed as the goal of the working of the Spirit in the world, for this reason, the latter can rightly be called the Spirit of Christ even from the beginning of salvation history. In Rahner’s words: “Since the universal efficacy of the Spirit is directed from the very beginning to the zenith of its historical mediation, which the Christ event (or in other words the final cause of the mediation of the Spirit to the world), it can be truly said that this Spirit everywhere and from the very beginning the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the incarnate divine Logos.”

The idea that God is present and at work through the Word and the Spirit during creation and in the history of salvation is clearly taught by the Fathers of the Church. In Irenaeus, founder of the theology of history, we find the emphasis on the unity of the economy of salvation. Central to his theological reflection is the role of revelation of the Son of God, the Word: “visibile Patris Filius”. The manifestation of God by the Logos with the creation. Irenaeus integrates the pre-Mosaic dispensation into the history of salvation by distinguishing four covenants made by God with humankind: through Noah, through Abraham, through Moses and through Christ. In each covenant the Word of God is operative. He was the one who gave to Noah

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2. Ibid.
the measurement of the arch, who visited Abraham at Mambre.
directed Jacob on his journey, and spoke with Moses from the
bush.\footnote{176} Moreover, it was not only the Word, but Christ himself.
the Word incarnate, “who at that time, indeed, by means of his
patriarchs and prophets, was prefiguring and declaring beforehand
future things, fulfilling his part by anticipation in the dispensations
of God, accustoming his inheritance to obey God...”\footnote{177} If what
comes before Christ is the anticipation of future realities, the
incarnation of the Word marks the culmination of the one unified
process of revelation of God. At the same time, Irenaeus teaches
that the Word and the Spirit always work together in creation
and in salvation history like the “two hands” of God.\footnote{178} In service
of the Word, the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of prophecy who inspires
the prophets to announce the future events of Christ.\footnote{179}

A similar connection between the inspiring activity of the Word
and the Spirit is also envisaged by Clement of Alexandria. When he
says that the knowledge of the Greek philosophers derives from
divine inspiration, he uses the expression “pneuma aistheseos”
(spirit of perception) which comes from the “supreme Wisdom”
(paras kyriotates sophias).\footnote{180} Elsewhere the Wisdom of God
is identified with the Logos.\footnote{181} For Clement, this pneuma coming
from the Word and inspiring the philosophers is practically the
same as the Holy Spirit who also inspired the prophets of the Old
Testament.\footnote{182}

In his encyclical letter, Dominum et Vivificantem, Pope John
Paul II invites us “to go further back, to embrace the whole of the
action of the Holy Spirit even before Christ — from the beginning,
throughout the world, and especially in the economy of the Old
Covenant.”\footnote{183} We may ask in what especially consists this action
of the Holy Spirit before the coming of Christ, from the beginning
of the world. While Irenaeus recognizes the special task of the
Holy Spirit in inspiring the patriarchs and the prophets of the Old

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{177} Adv. Haer., IV, 21, 3 (ANF I, 493).
\footnote{178} Adv. Haer., I, 22, 1 (ANF I, 347); IV, 20, 1 (ANF I, 487); V, 1, 3 (ANF I, 527); V, 5, 1 (ANF I, 531); V, 6, 1 (ANF I, 531 f.).
\footnote{179} Cf. Adv. Haer., IV, 20, 6 (ANF I, 489); IV, 20, 8 (ANF I, 490).
\footnote{180} Strom., I, 4 (ANF II, 305); I, 17 (ANF II, 320); VI, 17 (ANF II, 516).
\footnote{181} Cf. Strom., V, 14 (ANF II, 465); VII, 2 (ANF II, 525).
\footnote{182} Cf. Strom., V, 13 (ANF II, 465); cf. Lilla, Clement of Alexandria, 16.
\footnote{183} DeV 53.
\end{footnotes}
Dispensation, Clement of Alexandria indicates the action of the Holy Spirit as consisting of inspiring the Greek philosophers and the prophets of Israel.\textsuperscript{184} Clement would have no difficulty in extending this inspiration to the ancient philosophers of various nations other than the Greek world. As a matter of fact he numbers among the wise men philosophers of the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Gauls, the Celts, . . . and of innumerable other races.\textsuperscript{185} The Indian Gymnosophists are also included; so too are some of the Indians who obey the precepts of Buddha.\textsuperscript{186}

In view of an analogous concept of inspiration some theologians are of the opinion that, parallel to the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures, the sacred writings of other religious traditions are also inspired by the Holy Spirit and contain genuine truths which lead people to salvation.\textsuperscript{187} If Vatican II recognizes the presence of elements of truth and holiness in other religions,\textsuperscript{188} these elements are to be found above all in the sacred writings of these religions. \textit{Ad Gentes} teaches that "doubtless, the Holy Spirit was already at work in the world before Christ was glorified,"\textsuperscript{189} and that it is the Holy Spirit who calls all human persons to Christ "by the seeds of the Word and by the preaching of the gospel."\textsuperscript{190} The sacred scriptures of world religions are rightly considered the privileged vessels of the "seeds of the Word" seminated under the inspiration of the Spirit.

However, we must admit, with Clement of Alexandria, that this \textit{Spiritus} who inspired the ancient philosophers and religious teachers as well spoke through the prophets of the Old Covenant, was already the Spirit coming from the Word and preparing people for

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{184} Clement also attributes the title "prophet" to the Greek philosophers; cf. \textit{Clement}, I, 5 (ANF II, 490).
\item\textsuperscript{185} Cf. \textit{Strom.}, I, 15 (ANF II, 316). According to Clement, Greek philosophy is to a great extent, from non-Greek philosophers.
\item\textsuperscript{186} Cf. ibid.; I am sure that Clement would have mentioned the ancient sages of Confucius and Lao-Tzu, had he been informed of them.
\item\textsuperscript{188} NA 2; AG 9.
\item\textsuperscript{189} 34.
\item\textsuperscript{190} 315.
\end{itemize}
the true "philosophy" of the "christian message." As the title Christ can rightly be given to the Word prior to his incarnation, this Spirit should already be called the Spirit of Christ.

If the Spirit is always the Spirit of Christ even before the incarnation, with greater reason can he be called by this title after the glorification of Jesus. During his earthly life Jesus was endowed with the Spirit and led by him. In the resurrection, Jesus became a "life-giving Spirit," or giver of the Spirit. One may say that while during his earthly life Jesus was determined by the Spirit, this relationship was inverted through the resurrection and Jesus became the determination of the Spirit.¹⁹¹ From now on the title "Spirit of Christ" acquires its full meaning which implies two things: on the one hand the action of the risen Christ is carried out in terms of the Holy Spirit; on the other, the Spirit of God has now acquired an inalienable christological character, standing at the complete disposal of the risen Christ.¹⁹²

In the encyclical letter on the Holy Spirit, the Pope not only urges us "to go further back," but also invites us "to look further and go further afield," keeping in mind the teaching of Vatican II on "the Holy Spirit's activity also 'outside the visible body of the Church'."¹⁹³ We must acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence and activity everywhere in the world. But this Spirit is always the "Spirit of Christ," a title which expresses the presence and activity of the risen Jesus in the world, both within and beyond the visible confines of Christianity.¹⁹⁴ Through his Spirit, the risen Christ is present and active everywhere even when he is not explicitly acknowledged. In his reflection on the presence of Jesus Christ in extra-christian religions, Rahner holds the necessity of supernatural faith in non-Christians in order to achieve salvation. This faith is made possible by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, this faith must be related to Christ, even if in an implicit way. Rahner comes to the conclusion that "Christ is present and efficacious in the non-christian believer (therefore in the non-christian religions) through his Spirit."¹⁹⁵

In what then consists this hidden presence of Christ or implicit...

¹⁹³. Dev 53; cf. LG 16; GS 22.
¹⁹⁴. Cf. Dupuis, Jesus Christ and His Spirit, 183 f.
in him through the Spirit? We may speak of a christic structure of existence in the world. Through his twofold transcendence, a total surrender to the Father and total dedication to the brethren, Christ has accomplished a new sphere of existence in the world.

This new existence is characterized by the Spirit of love and freedom. Led by the Holy Spirit, Jesus was able to abandon himself totally to the Father in loving obedience and give himself unconditionally to his brethren. Through the paschal mystery, Jesus has shattered the bondage of selfishness and the barrier of divisions among human beings and created a new sphere of freedom and communion for humankind. Wherever a person surrenders himself to God or the ultimate reality, under whatever names, and dedicates himself to the cause of justice, peace, brotherhood and solidarity with other people, he has implicitly accepted Christ and entered into this christic existence. This is possible only through the working of the Spirit of Christ. As it was through the Spirit that Jesus accomplished this new sphere of existence, anyone who enters into this christic existence of love and freedom is necessarily under the action of the same Spirit of Christ.

The possibility for non-Christians, even non-believers, to participate in the paschal mystery of Christ through the Spirit is taught by Vatican II: “All this holds true not only for Christians, but for all men of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way . . . we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery.” Instead of christic existence, the Council uses the expression “paschal mystery” of Christ. One may object by saying that it would be arrogant to claim this new sphere of existence a christic existence. The Buddhists, for example, would call it Buddha existence as well. I agree and believe that the Buddhists should do so by being true to Buddha. But, at the same time, I do not think a Christian may renounce this claim to a christic existence if he wishes to remain

196. GS 22.
197. Rahner was once asked by Nishitani, the well known Japanese philosopher: “Would you say if I were to treat you as an anonymous Zen Buddhist. Rahner replied that Nishitani may and should do so from his point of view; cf. “Universality of Proposition,” T1, 16: 219.
true to his own Christian commitment.  

Some may have fear that by identifying the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ one seeks to reduce the action of the Spirit to that of Christ, making him a mere function of the risen Jesus. To clarify this doubt, one must bear in mind the mutual dependence between the Spirit and the Christ event. The latter is both the goal and the effect of the activity of the Spirit in the world. The Holy Spirit prepares for and effects the mystery of the incarnation and the paschal mystery as the definitive outcome of his working in history. What remains now for the Spirit to do is to lead the whole world into the mystery of Christ, and through him, to the Father. Far from being reduced to a function of Christ, the Spirit is continuing his own activity as responsive love in the world, an activity which was started by him from the beginning, reached a definitive climax in the Christ event, and is moving towards its eschatological fulfillment at the end time.

**CONCLUSION**

In this article I have started with the teaching of Vatican II on the relationship of Christianity with other religions. Then in the spectrum of views four different paradigms together with their respective exponents are dealt with. The third part of the article presents an inclusive, pneumatological christocentrism as an adequate paradigm for the universal presence of Jesus Christ in world religions. This pneumatological christocentrism understands Christ as both normative and constitutive for salvation. Whereas in the spectrum of views four paradigms are dealt with, it is argued here that the second and the third paradigms, namely a christocentrism presenting Christ as constitutive or only normative for salvation, should be combined into one. Although they represent different positions, a normative christology, if it is really coherent, should merge with a christology which holds Christ as constitutive as well as normative for salvation.

While an exclusive ecclesiocentrism and a pluralist theocentrism

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well explain one of the two basic beliefs of Christian faith, namely, the universal salvific will of God and the necessary mediation of Jesus Christ (1 Tim 2: 4-5), only the inclusive christocentric view is able to explain both central statements of Christianity. Moreover, whereas the exclusive view is hardly in keeping with the teaching of Vatican II, the pluralist view does not give due consideration to the historical event of Christ. The attempts at discounting the link between the "universal Christ" and the historical Jesus, or at separating Jesus Christ from his Spirit, are not justified. There is a basic unity between the cosmic Christ and the historical Jesus. The cosmic Christ working through "seeds of the Word" before the Christ event is the one who was destined to become incarnate in Jesus Christ. Through the resurrection, this same Jesus Christ has entered into a pneumatic existence and become the historical and pancosmic Christ. Similarly, the Spirit of God from the beginning of salvation history the Spirit of Christ as much as the Christ event is the goal of the Spirit's activity in the world. This Spirit becomes even more fully the Spirit of Christ through the resurrection, Christ becomes a life-giving Spirit, principle and sender of the Spirit who mediates between the particularity of the Christ event and its universal saving significance. As has been shown, the universal presence of Christ in the world before and after the Christ event is effected through his Spirit. The "seeds of the Word" were sown through the inspiration of the Spirit in the prophets of Israel as well as in the Greek philosophers and the sages of various nations in the world. After the resurrection of Jesus, it is again the Spirit of Christ who, in a known to God, guides all human persons of good will to participate in the one christic existence of love, freedom and brotherhood. Hence, this inclusive paradigm is aptly called a pneumatological christocentrism.

There is a further difficulty with the pluralist theocentric view presented as opposing a christocentric view. It is true that the design of God is the ultimate source of salvation. But God's communication to the world is carried out through two inseparable basic modes of mediation in the history of salvation: through the Word and the Spirit. The Christ event is the definitive salvific sign, both as realization and manifestation, of the salvation of God to the world. Salvation is at one and the same
time theocentric as well as christocentric. Hence, the question "theocentric or christocentric" is a false dilemma. The two actually coincide. Thus christian theology is theocentric inasmuch as it is christocentric, and vice versa.

As has been said in the introduction, this article presents a theological reflection on the relationship of Christ to the world religions. Another article is probably needed to apply this pneumatological christocentric paradigm to a real dialogue with the other religions. Here in the conclusion only some basic ideas can be indicated. From the perspective of a pneumatological christocentric view, what would be the relationship between the mission of Christ, of the Spirit and of the Church? Their relationship may be understood as follows: Jesus has accomplished God’s salvation for humanity, the Spirit renders it present and actual in the world, and the witness of the Church offers it a privileged visibility.\(^\text{200}\) In this case evangelization means announcing the good news that in Jesus Christ God has reconciled all things to himself and that this mystery is present to all human persons through the Spirit of Christ. Seen under this light, the proclamation of the christian message must be understood in terms of "educere". This means, in the first place, to bring forth to explicit consciousness a reality which is already present in human persons. Then "educere" also means to "lead from" one regime or mediation of salvation to another regime or mediation.\(^\text{201}\)

*Ad Gentes* teaches that the Holy Spirit calls all human persons to Christ both "by the seeds of the Word and by the preaching of the gospel."\(^\text{202}\) As has been pointed out, the Word has sown his seeds in the religious traditions of humankind through the inspiration of his Spirit. These seeds are contained above all in the sacred writings of the great religions. Thus, for the evangelization of a particular people to be effective it is indispensable to study the sacred writings of their religious traditions in order to discover the seeds of the Word already present there and to enable them to fructify fully through contact with the christian message. At the same time, to reflect on the christian doctrine in the light of a particular tradition would also bring forth new insights and deepen

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201. Cf. *ibid.*, 257.
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Christian’s understanding of his own faith. For example, a
reconstruction of the mystery of the Trinity from the taoist perspective
certainly offer significant contribution to the christian
understanding of God. Moreover, to be really meaningful, the
Christian message must be presented in relation to the religious
sections of the people to whom it is addressed.

This brings us to the importance of interreligious dialogue.
Along with announcing the good news of Christ, dialogue with
other religions should be understood as an integral element of
evangelization. Interreligious dialogue must be based on mutual
understanding and love, but it should also be based on personal convic-
tion and commitment to one’s own faith. One should bear in mind
that the dialogue partner wishes to know exactly what the other
person holds and not just a compromised position. The hope is
that both parties may be enlightened and enriched by a sincere
exchange of views and may come to a deeper understanding not
just of the other’s religion but also of one’s own faith.

Finally I would like to end with the words of Pope John Paul II
in his address at the conclusion of the plenary assembly of the
place within the Church’s salvific mission; . . . In this ecclesial
context, it is also necessary to avoid exclusivism and dichotomies.
Authentic dialogue becomes witness and true evangelization is
achieved by respecting and listening to one another (RH 603). In this case, “dichotomy” means everything that would
break the link between interreligious dialogue and evangelization,
while “exclusivism” means reducing evangelization only to proclama-
tion or to interreligious dialogue. Dialogue and proclamation
take go hand in hand, wherever possible.

For a recent contribution to “A Mahayana Understanding of the Trinity,”
see M. Keenan, The Meaning of Christ. A Mahayana Theology (Maryknoll: Orbis,
1980), 64-69.


John Paul II, Address at the Conclusion of the Plenary Assembly of the Sec-
etariat for Non-Christians (1984) n. 5; italics mine.