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**THE MYTHIC-COSMOLOGICAL EQUATION: A
DIFFERENT APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING
REALITY**

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“Let’s reinvent the gods. All the myths of the ages.”

-Jim Morrison

To some extent we all live in different realities. It is such that in the 21st Century that these realities collide more than ever before. Different worldviews have always created different realities – but now we come face to face with all of them and, I contend, that they all are real; or at least have a reality value insofar as they influence an individual or group’s view of everyday life, death, and the Universe (Wilber, 2000).

It is important to remember that one person’s mythology (Campbell, 1987) is another person’s religion or spiritual tradition. To the Ancient Greeks, their religion was not mythology – nor to any other ancient culture. Today, to the Christians, their religion is not mythological – it is a vital part of how they see the entirety of the Cosmos and how they live everyday life. It is difficult to accept that one’s closely held religious or spiritual belief may one day be considered, by a future culture, to be mythology in the way we consider the Greek gods (Hesiod, 2008) to be purely mythological in nature – that is, lacking in reality value.

As I contend, however, each of these so-called myths along with religious and spiritual traditions have a Reality value that influences the daily life of the believer and can even lead to social and global – not to mention internal – conflict. The scientist may say that we all live in an objective physical reality – but such is not, necessarily true, in the deepest realms of human consciousness: the mythic consciousness.

To this end, I have created the Mythic Cosmological Equation – a philosophical equation that brings these themes together. It is as follows:

$$M + C = R$$

$$\text{Mythic} + \text{Cosmological} = \text{Reality}$$

It is accompanied by a Reality Value Scale (as opposed to Reality Scale) because we are discussing realms of consciousness and not, necessarily, the objective physical reality. The Reality Value Scale (RVS) is as follows:

$$\frac{\{\text{RV1}\}}{\text{_____}\{\text{RV10}\}}$$

In ascending levels of Reality Value with Reality Value 10 being the highest level of belief or “knowing” in terms of the mythic, spiritual and/or religious and Reality Value 1 being complete skepticism and disbelief in a mythic, spiritual or religious consciousness or experience.

In this sense I refer to the Mythic as the Mythic (Inclusive) – by which I mean inclusive of religion and spirituality and Cosmological as the creation story that begins the mythic process then equality the Reality or point on the Reality Value Scale of the individual or group being discussed. Reality, in that sense, is what is perceived by the individual or group to be real again, hence, Reality Value as the main means of philosophical measurement.

First presented at Yale University at the Society for Consciousness Studies 2017 Conference, the theory has widespread implications to the study of consciousness, myth, spirituality, religion and, perhaps, even mental health.

Here is a story to demonstrate an aspect of my point. A graduate student whom I had the pleasure of teaching before in a Consciousness course at the Institute wanted to do an independent study in Mayan Spirituality (Coe & Houston, 2015). He had researched various professors and their interests and finally asked me if I would supervise the independent study; which would be a combination of his mystical experiences and a study of the *Popol Vuh* - which you will know as the Mayan Creation Story (Tedlock, 1996).

A former scientist who decided to pursue a Master’s Degree in East-West Psychology upon his retirement, he had a number of mystical experiences related to his experiences with Mayan Spirituality in the past. Now, beyond his extraordinary work that semester what I noticed was that what he called Mayan Spirituality (Miller & Taube, 2015) – as it was his personal lineage – other people referred to as Mayan Mythology.

Thus, in my mind, the Mythic-Cosmological Equation was born. In essence: It’s all real somewhere on the Reality Value Scale; a scale

which does not debate the true nature of spiritual, mythic or religious reality only how influential the belief system is to the individual or group. What others called mythology, my student called spiritual or religion. Thus, beyond the equation itself, the Mythic (Inclusive) was born.

The Mythic (Inclusive) goes beyond the traditional sense of the Mythic and embraces myth, religion and spirituality. It resonates with all traditions – and excludes no one and no tradition. It does not question closely held religious or spiritual beliefs, nor those who are skeptical. It demonstrates the various realities within which people live in this great global time of culture sharing (Wilber, 2000).

While some look for a non-materialist, meta-theory of consciousness, or attempt to point out how ancient spiritual and religious traditions mirror aspects of contemporary science The Mythic Cosmological Equation respects the mythic, spiritual and religious traditions as they are and have been throughout the ages – without judgment. This ranges from the gods to the nature of the spirit, to something one person may consider a metaphorical story – along with materialist science.

As such, the Mythic Cosmological Equation combined with the Reality Value Scale does not diminish any form of mythic, religious or spiritual study, nor does it compete with materialist science. It opens a new avenue for research in each of these areas. Each individual and related group has a worldview. We are sharing those world views in peaceful and violent ways across the planet. This equation is a bridge to understanding each other, history and our current future cultures.

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