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REALITY, LINGUISTIC TURN, PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND ITS BEYOND

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ABSTRACT

Homo-sapiens being rational has a purpose of life—to be Wellbeing from Being. In order to achieve this purpose, religion comes in the front line since the beginning of human civilization. Philosophy of religion, however, explores and analyzes, how, in religion, the ways how to achieve the purpose, have been paved or are to be paved. The pertinent question: Is it only through the performance of the rituals or only through the fundamental knowledge of religion or through the both? In this course, linguistic turn in philosophy, in twentieth century, makes a paradigm shift in every sector of philosophy including the philosophy of religion and this paper is an exposition cum evaluation of the effect of this paradigm shift in the philosophy of religion.

Keywords: God, Religion, Language, Cognitive, Non-Cognitive, Reality, Performative.

Philosophy springs from primitive wonder and moves towards the abolition of wonder, towards understanding the world so well through and through that no room is left for wonder at things being as they are. —**Aristotle**

INTRODUCTION

1.1 HUMAN, RATIONALITY & RELIGION

Among the different features of human being, rationality being the most distinctive, empowers to think and make plan for future life. That is why, perhaps, Aristotle, in 300 B.C.E conceived human being as the Rational Animal and his purpose, for him, is: to be Wellbeing from Being. But the pertinent question is: how? In order to achieve the state of Wellbeing from Being, Aristotle's consideration was the exploration of the virtues—wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. Later on, however, some other Institutions such as Church and State have been developed and flourished in order to achieve this purpose; but the ways are different as the paths paved by the Church and the State are not the same, though these Institutions never deny the need of the inculcation of the virtues mentioned earlier in some forms or others. The Church inculcates these virtues as the forms of religious practices whereas the State indoctrinates these virtues as the applications of the laws. What is important to note down here that religion, from the primitive age, helps the human species how to overcome the unknown fear and tends to promote all the human beings under a single umbrella named as humanism, though it is true that there are, at present, different International, National as well as Tribal religion. Religion is, in fact, as old as the beginning of the human civilization and it is, still significant in order to lead the human life in general and a state in particular.

1.2 RELIGION & ITS DEFINITION

Though the lexicographical meaning of the term religion is— ‘a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs.’ the term religion bears different meanings depending on its uses; such as (i) a specific fundamental set of beliefs and practices generally agreed upon by a number of persons or sects, (ii) the body of persons adhering to a particular set of beliefs and practices, (iii) the life or state of a monk, nun, etc., (iv) the practice of religious beliefs, (v) the ritual observance of faith, (vi) something one believes in and follows devotedly, (vi) a point or matter of ethics or conscience and so on.

1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER

As religion is one of the fundamental components of the human civilization, the study of religion has been emerged since the beginning of the civilization depending on the various needs of human being time to time. Naturally, the philosophers are very much eager to philosophize the essential characteristics of religion, its origin and development, its purposes, its types, its relation with morality and so on. Though philosophy is simply known as that subject the chief purpose of which is dealing the Reality and its nature, the philosophy itself has been metamorphosized in course of time. Naturally, the methods of philosophizing the religion, science and so on has been upgraded. In the beginning of the twentieth century, when the philosophers made a linguistic turn in philosophy as an impact of the Logical Positivists as well as the influenced made by Wittgenstein in his Tractatus Logico Philosophicus, the approach of the study of the philosophy of religion has also been changed. The philosophers have been trying to



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settle the meaning of the religious language as—the religious languages are devoid of any cognitive value and are not at all scientific as these are not grounded on fact, rather these are supernatural, because of the dependency on faith. Later on, when some philosophers in the middle of the twentieth century bring a paradigm shift in the study of philosophy of language by introducing the performative utterances, the study of philosophy of religion, naturally, has been rejuvenated. But this particular point i.e., the use of performative utterances in religion, has not been explored; that is why the purpose of this paper is to explore the impact of linguistic turn including the performative utterances in religion with a special reference to the tribal religion through a thorough study cum analysis on linguistic turn in philosophy (Section-I), impact of linguistic turn in religion (Section-II) and impact of linguistic turn in tribal religion and conclusion (Section-III).

LINGUISTIC TURN IN PHILOSOPHY (SECTION-I)

2.1 LINGUISTIC TURN IN PHILOSOPHY

Twentieth century is known as the golden period of philosophical enquiry not because of the discovery of a set of new philosophical theories, but because of the invention as well as the application of new methods such as method of conceptual analysis, method of linguistic analysis, method of linguistic phenomenology and so on. Among these methods, linguistic turn in philosophy is unique. It is unique in this sense that after the advent of this method, almost all branches of philosophy such as epistemology, ethics, religion etc. have been influenced in such a way that all of these branches are reassessed or rejuvenated or resumed through the linguistic turn. Linguistic turn in philosophy is, actually, a kind of analysis of the language in order to depict the nature of Reality. Grammarians and the other literary persons are also concerned with the language, but they are not interested about the nature of Reality. In addition to this, they are not also concerned with the logical appraisalⁱ of a language. ‘Why two predicates’, for example, ‘are to be called as incompatible?’ is not at all the business of the grammarians or the other literary persons, whereas for a philosopher, especially, linguistic philosopher, it is a very important question which is to be answered.

2.2 LINGUISTIC TURN AND THE MEANINGFULNESS OF THE STATEMENT

At the beginning of the twentieth century, some philosophers hold that linguistic confusions are the source of metaphysics that is why, in order to uplift philosophy in the realm of science; they believe that linguistic analysis is essential, because only linguistic analysis is capable to determine whether a sentence is scientifically meaningful or not. Here the term scientifically meaningful indicates the meaningfulness of a statement either on the ground of empirical method or through the method of reasoning. On the basis of the application of the method of reasoning, all analytic statements including mathematical statements are meaningful, because this type of statements are independent of facts or this type of statements are truth by the virtue of the meaning of the words it is contained.ⁱⁱ But in case of synthetic statements, the verification principles are to be needed. This means a synthetic statement is meaningful if and only if it passes through the criteria of verifiability.

2.3 LINGUISTIC TURN AS A FORM OF FORMAL LOGICAL ANALYSIS

Later on, however, some philosophers of logic introduce the logical language through symbolism in order to remove the vagueness of ordinary language as well as to determine the ground of mathematical language as this language is based only on the conceptual analysis, instead of fact. For example, Bertrand Russell, in his theory of description proves how a statement being associated with the negative existence fact could be meaningful through the logical analysis which is based on the propositional functions. Thus, the statement— ‘Jones met a man.’ is meaningful if and only if it is analysed as: There is at least one x such that x is a man and Jones met with that x; though the expression ‘a man’ does not denote who is that particular person. It will be clear, if another example is considered. If it is said, ‘Jones met a unicorn.’ then the statement is also meaningful and there is no doubt on it. But the issue is: how this statement could be meaningful, though the unicorn does not exist in the real world? Following, Russell’s theory of description, the statement— ‘Jones met a unicorn.’ could be analysed as: There is at least one x such that x is a unicorn and Jones met with that x. Considering this analysis, it is clear that the statement ‘Jones met a unicorn.’ is consisted of two parts—(i) ‘There is at least one x such that x is a unicorn.’ and (ii) ‘Jones met with that x.’ Here these both conjuncts are false, because unicorn does not exist in the corporeal world as like as a lion exist. Again, the statement, ‘Jones met with that x.’ is also false, finally, the statement ‘Jones met a unicorn.’ is false, but the statement ‘Jones met a unicorn.’ is meaningful.

2.4 LINGUISTIC TURN AND WITTGENSTEIN

In 1921, after the publication of magnum opus ‘Tractatus Logico Philosophicus’, by Ludwig Wittgenstein, a very simple but profound technique of linguistic analysis is appeared. Following, Wittgenstein, a statement is meaningful if and only if it is a logical picture of the reality.ⁱⁱⁱ Whereas, if a statement is failed to be the logical picture of the reality; then it will be non-sensical. By the term non-sensical, Wittgenstein does not mean it is meaningless, rather this term signifies a separate domain of some statements which are used in mathematics, logic, metaphysics, ethics, and religion and so on. The statements which are used in religion and ethics are not as



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same as the statements which are used in science i.e., the statements of religion and ethics are not associated with the picturization of the reality. Science is not at all philosophy; that is why, he says, the philosophers should be not hankered with the task—to uplift philosophy in to the status of science. The domain of religion and ethics and even philosophy is different from the domain of science.^{iv} Immanuel Kant, in the end of the eighteenth century, also believed that religion as well as ethics are concerned with the practical reason, instead of associated with the pure reason.

However, when Wittgenstein brings a paradigm shift in the realm of linguistic analysis in ‘Philosophical Investigation’ by considering that the meaning of a statement does not depend only on the logical picture of the reality that is depicted by the statement connected with the fact, rather it depends on the use of the statements following the language game in a particular language following a particular form; linguistic analysis is seemed to be uplifted in its optimum level. Here the language is not just treated as the means of communication, rather it is used as a therapy in our day-to-day life, because of its association with the forms of life. That is why, Wittgenstein, sets a new task for the linguistic philosopher—to describe how a statement is used in a particular language following the language game. There could not be a fixed meaning of a statement; it depends on how the statement is used in a particular language following the language game i.e., the rules of using the language. A statement may be treated as necessary from a particular perspective; again, the same statement could be possible in another perspective.

2.5 LINGUISTIC TURN AND J.L. AUSTIN

J.L. Austin, however, in his book, ‘How to do things with words (1955)’, brings a revolution in linguistic philosophy by tracing out the performative utterances. He says, in language, in general, two types of utterances are used. Amongst which the first one is constative utterances which are the subject of true or false on the basis of the reason or facts and the other one is performative utterances which are neither true nor false, rather these utterances themselves are performance i.e., utterances are identical with the performances. For example, ‘I read.’ is descriptive. It is descriptive because, it can be categorised as true if and only if I, in fact, read; otherwise, it would be false. Whereas in case of a performative utterance, such as ‘I promise.’ or ‘I bet.’ are, in fact, performance, that is why it is irrelevant to ask the question about their truth or falsity. What can be said about these types of utterances—these are either successful or unsuccessful. J. L. Austin points out, these types of utterances are the phenomena of our life, the method of demarcation of such type of utterances is linguistic phenomenological method and the criteria of the demarcation of such type of utterances are—Grammatical, Vocabulary, Happiness and Unhappiness and Logical. Whether these criteria are sufficient to mark the performative utterance or not is not the business of this paper, rather this paper focuses on whether there could be any impact of performative utterance in the language of religion as like as the influence made by the logical positivists as well as Wittgenstein.

IMPACT OF LINGUISTIC TURN IN RELIGION (SECTION-II)

3.1 EDUCATION AND RELIGION

As an after effect of the linguistic turn in philosophy in twentieth century, the philosophers start to concentrate upon the question, whether the language of religion or in other words, the statements which are used in religion bear any cognitive value or not. It is needless to say again that religion is as old as the beginning of human civilization and has been playing an important role in order to lead the human life. Even today, none can deny the significant of religion in human life. That is why, at the outset, the education system, all around the world, was chiefly religious-oriented. In a single sentence—Education means religious education and vice-verse. If anyone, at that time, wanted to be oriented by the knowledge, he must pave the path of religion and this tendency was granted up to the end of eighteenth century. However, after the effect of the renaissance, the whole world started to focus on education from the perspective of science. But this does not mean that all the problems have been resolved and need of religious-centric education has been vanished like a camphor. In fact, science itself has some sort of reservations. For example, we are all concerned about the theory of Big Bang, the most acceptable scientific theory of the creation of the universe. According to this theory, the universe has been created due to a huge exploration. But why the exploration has been taken place, the scientists have been failed to give the answer. Again, science being partial, has failed to set up the aim of human life.

3.1 NATURE OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE FOLLOWING AQUINAS

From this background, let us peep into the nature of religious language. As it has been mentioned earlier, some of the statements may be loaded with cognitive value (cognitive), and being scientific, these can be regarded as true or false whereas the other statements may be devoid of any cognitive value (non-cognitive), but these statements are applied to serve other purposes, in philosophy of religion, the religious statements have also been critically analysed from these two perspectives—cognitive and non-cognitive.



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The statements which are loaded with cognitive value are called as true or false by the virtue of the fact or reason. For example, the statement— ‘The sky is blue.’ is true because the sky is appeared before us as blue. But the statement— ‘God loves humankind. (GH)’ is not as same as the previous cognitive statement, though we all understand the meaning of the statement—GH irrespective of the fact that the term ‘God’ has no reference in the real world. Here lies the problem. How a statement, which is devoid of factual reference in true sense, could be meaningful? It is Aquinas, one of the great Scholastic thinkers developed the doctrine of ‘analogical predication’ instead of using the words univocally or equivocally, because of the superiority of the God i.e., the human beings are created by the God. When the same term good is coined by the human being and also by the God that does not mean these two are used identically, because the God is the Creator and the human beings are created, rather these are, for Aquinas, are analogical. In order to get the use of the term analogical, let us know the meaning of the term faithfulness through an analogy based on ‘downward’. When it is said that ‘A pet dog is faithful.’ this does not mean that the quality of faithfulness of the pet dog is equal (univocal) to its superior being i.e., the human, again the faithfulness of the pet dog and the faithfulness of the human beings are not totally different (equivocal) as like as bat means a particular bird or the thing used in baseball; rather it is analogical. In case of the God who is superior, the same path of analogy is applied, but in different manner that is ‘upward’. Thus, for Aquinas, ‘when we say that God is good, we are saying that there is a quality of the infinitely perfect Being that corresponds to what at our own human level we call goodness. In this case, it is the divine goodness that is the true, normative, and unbroken reality, whereas human life shows at best a faint, fragmentary, and distorted reflection of this quality. Only in God can the perfections of being occur in their true and unfractured nature: only God knows, loves, and is righteous and wise in the full and proper sense.’¹

But the question is: how the gap between the perfect goodness possessed by the God and the imperfect wisdom of goodness possessed by the human being could be bridged over? For Aquinas, it is not known, because analogy is not an instrument for exploring and mapping the infinite divine nature; rather it is an account of the way in which terms are used of the Deity whose existence is, at this point, being presupposed.

3.2 NATURE OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE FOLLOWING PAUL TILlich

In order to bridge over the gap between infinite qualities possessed by the creator and the knowledge of the infinite qualities of the created beings, Paul Tillich introduced another doctrine based on the distinction between ‘sign’ and ‘symbol’. For understanding the doctrine of Tillich, let us understand the difference between a sign and symbol. Though the terms sign and symbol refer other than the thing itself, for Tillich, symbol is more fundamental than the sign as the symbol is inherent in to the form of life. Red light, for example, is the sign to be stopped for the vehicle in road, whereas a flag is a symbol of a free Nation where each and every citizen participates. The most fundamental difference lies between the sign and the symbol—sign is arbitrary, but symbol is permanent because of the inner connection between the symbol and the participants. This inner connection is the reflection which ‘opens up levels of reality which otherwise are closed to us’ and at the same time ‘unlocks dimensions and elements of our soul’² which is corresponded to the new aspects of the world it reveals. So, when it is said, ‘The God is good.’ this refers to the symbolic use of the goodness of the God who is the ultimate reality based on the religious faith. Thus, to quote Tillich, ‘Whatever we say about that which concerns us ultimately, whether or not we call it God, has a symbolic meaning. It points beyond itself while participating in that to which it points. In no other way can faith express itself adequately. The language of faith is the language of symbols.’³ Now the point is: whether there is any possibility of using the terms as non-symbolic. Tillich’s answer is yes, but this is possible only when the statements are made about the ultimate reality which religion calls God— that God is Being-itself, whereas beyond this, all theological statements—such as that ‘God is eternal., ‘God is living., ‘God is good., ‘God is personal., ‘God is the Creator., ‘God loves all creatures.’ and so on, are ultimately symbolic. From this, for Tillich, God being the ultimate reality is non-symbolic, but from the perspective of the created human beings He is symbolic.

But this doctrine has some short of reservations. If the human, being the possessor of partial knowledge are capable to apply only the symbolic forms of statements regarding the ultimate nature of the God i.e., could never disclose the ultimate nature of the God from the positive aspects then it goes against the idolatry thinking of the God and thereby ‘this doctrine constitutes a warning against the idolatry of thinking of God as merely a greatly magnified human being (anthropomorphism).’⁴

¹ Hick, John H: *The Philosophy of Religion*, Pearson, Chennai, 2015, P-84

² Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers), p. 42.

³Ibid. p-45.

⁴Hick, John H: *The Philosophy of Religion*, Pearson, Chennai, 2015, P-87



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3.2 NATURE OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE FOLLOWING THE DOCTRINE OF INCARNATION

However, the doctrine of incarnation seems to be overcome the reservation of the doctrine of Paul Tillich. This doctrine starts by considering the distinction between the metaphysical attribute of the God—aseity, eternity, infinity etc. and the moral attribute of the God—goodness, love, wisdom etc. Though the metaphysical attributes of the God are beyond of human knowledge, the moral attributes of the God could be imparted in the material form, only when the God reveals Himself in the form of finite human namely that of Jesus. This claim makes it possible to point to the person of Christ as showing what is meant by assertions such as ‘God is good’ and ‘God loves his human creatures.’

But this doctrine also not free from the criticism. Ian Crombie criticized, ‘The things we say about God are said on the authority of the words and acts of Christ, who spoke in human language, using parable; and so we too speak of God in parable—authoritative parable, authorized parable; knowing that the truth is not literally that which our parables represent, knowing therefore that now we see in a glass darkly, but trusting, because we trust the source of the parables, that in believing them and interpreting them in the light of each other we shall not be misled, that we shall have such knowledge as we need to possess for the foundation of the religious life.’⁵

3.2 THE VALUE OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

From the doctrine of analogy of Aquinas, the doctrine of symbol developed by Tillich and the doctrine of incarnation, it is clear that the God being the Ultimate Reality is not known to us as like as a table or a chair is known to us. One may ask the question about the reality i.e., the existence of the God, but this is a different issue, what is important here whether the language of theology bears any cognitive value or not. If this language does not have any cognitive value, then it is natural to ask: Is the religious language cognitively valueless? The answer is definitely negative. As a consequence, another important issue will come. What type of value does the religious language stand for?

It is true from the perspective of these theories discussed; the God that is the ultimate reality could never be disclosed in the same language through which the communication is possible. That is why the symbolic language is necessary. The God is, in fact, not just something who could be expressed; He is ultimately realized through the help of deep contemplation. The language of science and the language of theology can never be the same. The language of theology is always connected with a mission, a message, an order, a purpose for the human being. It is connected in such a way with the emotion of the human being that it leads towards the ultimate aim of the human being. But this does not mean there is no role of rationality in religion except emotion. Swami Vivekananda nicely represents this fact by saying that a particular object will be known to us if and only if the general quality of that particular object is known to us through the rationality. For example, a table is known to us because of the a-priori knowledge of table-ness governed by the faculty of the rationality. A particular table is pervaded by the general quality table-ness. Similarly, all the general qualities of the Universe are pervaded by one and only one ultimate Reality is none other than Brahman Who could be realized neither through the experience nor through the understanding, but through the rational mysticism which comes from the inside not from the outside. The faculty of experience, understanding and the spirituality does not belong to the water tight compartments; rather these are complementary to each other’s.^v

3.3 THE PURPOSES OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE FOLLOWING RANDALL

When the language of religion is upheld to serve the purposes other than the representation a fact, this means there are other perspectives through which religious language are valuable. Though this is non-cognitive approach, it is Randall who says that religious symbols are used to serve four purposes:

Purpose-1: arouse the emotions and stir people to actions through strengthening people’s practical commitment to what they believe to be right

Purpose-2: stimulate cooperative action and thus bind a community together through a common response to its symbols

Purpose-3: communicate qualities of experience that cannot be expressed by the literal use of language

Purpose-4: evoke and serve to foster and clarify human experience of an aspect of the world that can be called the ‘order of splendour’ or the Divine

Randall conceives the God from eyes of an Artist from the perspective of Aesthetic. When an Artist describes the world, it is not as same as the description of a scientist, because for a scientist the world as it is; whereas an Artist adds something more with it.

⁵Crombie, Ian: ‘Theology and Falsification’, ‘New Essays in Philosophical Theology’, eds. Antony Flew and Alasdair MacIntyre (London: S.C.M. Press and New York: Macmillan, 1955), pp. 122-123



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To quote Tagore, ‘In the mere substance and law of this world we do not meet the person, but where the sky is blue, and the grass is green, where the flower has its beauty and fruit its taste, where there is not only perpetuation of race, but joy of living and love of fellow creatures, sympathy and self-sacrifice, there is revealed to us the Person who is infinite.’⁶ Randall makes a departure from the traditional view about the God as he follows the other way which is as follows: ‘a quality to be discriminated in human experience of the world, the splendour of the vision that sees beyond the actual into the perfected and eternal realm of the imagination.’⁷ For him though the study of the God does not belong to the domain of science, the scientific study of religion is possible where ‘there can be a history, a phenomenology, a psychology, sociology, and a comparative study of religion. Hence, religion has become an object of intensive investigation and God is perforce identified as an idea that occurs within this complex phenomenon of religion.’⁸ Side by side, when Randall points out the functions of religious language, this means, he actually tries to explore the social aspects of religion. Religion is not just the discussions of the God and its existence, rather for him, ‘Religion, we now see, is a distinctive human enterprise with a socially indispensable function of its own to perform.’⁹

3.4 THE PURPOSES OF RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE FOLLOWING WITTGENSTEIN

Following Randall, Braithwaite considers the God not from the aesthetic perspective, but from the perspective of morality and thereby he says that the functions of religious language are to enhance a policy of actions that is the way of behaving to others. He also adds that the rituals which are performed in different religions are not important, what is important in different religions is the way how to lead a peaceful life on moral ground. The parables which are used in different religions, as he says, not just to assert the stories rather these assertions have an intention to carry out a certain behaviour policy which is subsumable under a sufficiently general moral principle.

Wittgenstein, being a non-cognitivist has a firm conviction that the boundary of science and the boundary of religion are different. In ‘Tractatus-Logico-Philosophicus’ he says that the propositions of science are meaningful because these are corresponded to the facts whereas the sentences of religion, though transcendent the facts, these are not cognitively meaningful. In ‘Philosophical Investigation’ he says that the language games which are used in science are different from the language games which are used in religion. Not only that the different religions have different language game concerning the forms of life. Whether the God exists or not is not at all an important question, for Wittgenstein, what is important is: how the term God is used in a particular religious language. He further adds that there is no conflict between science and religion, mundane world and the actual world, and even in the different religions because of the different language games that are to be used in order to get the meaning. From this viewpoint of Wittgenstein, one should not conclude that religion is meaningless. What Wittgenstein tries to establish in his both early and later life that the method, the domain, the function and so on of religion are different from the science. Here the task of the philosophy of religion is to make a morphological study, how a word is used in the domain of religion following the language game. He makes the religion practical but not in the form of practicing the rituals involves in the religion, but from the stand point religious language that is to show how a word is used in religious field.

3.4 RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE FOLLOWING J. L. AUSTINE’S PERFORMATIVE UTTERANCES

So, for later Wittgenstein, the meaning of a word whether it is from the field of religion or not depends on its use. It seems, as an after effect, J.L. Austin points out some utterances which are performative. This means uttering the words means performing the action. Here uttering and doing are identical. For example, ‘I bet’, ‘I promise’, ‘I order’, ‘I bequeath’ and so on are performative utterances.^{vi} The distinctive feature of these utterances lies in the fact that all of these utterances are devoid of truth value i.e., the question of true or false inapplicable to these utterances. What can be said is this: whether these utterances performed successfully or not. In philosophy of religion, the functions of religious language have been discussed which have been mentioned earlier, but the issues like (i) whether there are any performative utterances in religion? And, (ii) if there are performative utterances in religion, what are their roles? Have been yet to be discussed.

3.4.1 JESUS AND THEPERFORMATIVE UTTERANCES

Before delving the influence of performative utterances in religion, it should be mentioned here that whether Austin is successful to categories the performative utterances by using four criteria—Grammatical, Vocabulary, Happiness-Unhappiness and Logical is not relevant here, rather it is presupposed, here that there are performative utterances in language whether it is religious

⁶ Tagore, Rabindranath: Personality, Macmillan, New York, 1917, P-46

⁷ Randall, J.H: The Role of Knowledge in Western Religion, Beacon Press, Boston, 1958, P-119

⁸ Hick, John H: *The Philosophy of Religion*, Pearson, Chennai, 2015, P-93

⁹Randall, J.H: The Role of Knowledge in Western Religion, Beacon Press, Boston, 1958, P-6



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language or not. In case of religion, there are many performative utterances are used. Following New Testament, for example, after coming into the district of Caesarea Philippi when Jesus started to ask His disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ they answered ‘Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.’ But in case of asking the question about Jesus Himself— ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ At this Jesus remarked to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.’(Matthew16:13-17) Here the expression ‘Blessed you are’ performative, because here the utterance indicates the action performed by the Jesus.

3.4.2 LORD BUDDHA AND THE PERFORMATIVE UTTERANCES

It is the main task of religion to show the way how human being could be happy, though it is true, since the beginning, human beings have spent much time and energy in order to improve external conditions for happiness and a solution to their many problems. But practically, it has been observed that these wishes have not been fulfilled, human sufferings have been continued to increase, while the experience of happiness and peace is decreasing. That is why the Lord Buddha, in order to find a true method for gaining pure happiness and freedom from misery, pointed out that all our problems and all our unhappiness are caused by our uncontrolled mind and our non-virtuous actions. For the attainment of permanent peace i.e., the true cessation of all our suffering, the Lord Buddha, asked to be engaged in practicing the dharma through which we can learn to pacify and control our mind and to abandon non-virtuous actions and thereby their root cause. In Praise of Supreme Actions Sutra Buddha says, “May the infinite sufferings of god, demi-gods, and human beings, yama, animals, and hell beings, ripen upon me, and may migrators receive all happiness.”^{vii} Here the utterance the Lord Buddha is performative.

3.4.3 LORD KRISHNA AND THEPERFORMATIVE UTTERANCES

In the same way, when Lord Krishna in the Gita utters, in the Gita, ‘I have become Death, the destroyer of the worlds.’ this is also performative.

IMPACT OF LINGUISTIC TURN IN TRIBAL RELIGION AND CONCLUSION (SECTION-III)

If the religion is considered from the perspective of its historical development, tribal religion comes first, then national religion and finally, international religion. The difference between the tribal religion and the other religion lies in the fact that tribal religion covers a particular area and only a few communities are belonged to this religion. Side by side, no external members are permitted to be included in the tribal religion. Membership in tribal religion is absolutely birth centric. The relationship among the members of the tribal religion is very strong as it is tied up by the blood connection.

In order to get rid of the natural calamities as well as to come close to the nature, the tribals since the beginning have been trying to satisfy the spirits through their religious rituals. Now, concerning the spirit of this paper, let us search whether the symbolic forms of language are used in tribal religion or not.

Among the different practices of religious rituals in tribal religions, sacrifice and prayers are very much common, but profound though at the same time, these two practices are also taken as mandatory in some national and international religions also. The offerings through sacrifices are the most common practice of the tribals. Sacrifice means offering something to the unseen power i.e., spirit following a short-improvised invocation for expressing gratefulness. It is the Creator Himself who enjoined them to provide sustenance to spirits of nature and by extension to all other spirits who people the spirit-world. The sacrifices may be broadly classified into two—sacrifices of the community and the sacrifices of the individual. As the tribal society is communitarian and, therefore, community sacrifices for them are most important and they offer their sacrifices through the village priest in the sacred grove with the participation of the other members in the community. They perform every agricultural feast during the year in order to sacrifice (a) the Creator, (b) ancestral spirits of the village, and (c) minor spirits. Apart from this, the head of each family offers sacrifices to his family ancestors at least once a year at the new harvest feast and whenever an unexpected misfortune is ascribed to the displeasure of these spirits.

Prayer is also an associative part of the sacrifice. In order to draw the attention of the spirit in its optimum level the prayer is necessary. Sometimes, spirits may become harmful if they are not propitiated. The aim of much invocation, prayer and sacrifice is to turn away evil rather than to solicit positive good.

It should be noted here that since the spirits are not the subject of observation, the relationship between the members of the tribal religion and the human beings involves the symbolic presenting which involves—(a) the destruction of what is offered, (b) the



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killing of some living creature, (c) leaving food or drink for the spirit, for example, at a graveyard, (d) dedication living animals or chickens to a spirit, and so on. However, it should be kept in the mind that in these rituals there is always the idea of some deprivation on the part of the sacrifice—as if he or she is failed to please as a whole to the destined spirit to whom he or he tries to make satisfy. Another important point is to be noted here that the tribal communities allow to offer those animals or chicken to the God which are white colour in colour as for them white. Similarly, nonmaterial things, such as, rice, egg, etc. to be offered to Him have also to be of white colour. White colour is a sign of God’s purity and holiness.

So, it is clear, in tribal religion, symbolic forms are used. Not only that all of the invocations used in prayers are no doubt performative.

Finally, from the abovementioned discussion, it is clear that linguistic turn, makes philosophy including the philosophy of religion more practical. Religion is not science, because it tends to transcend the actual world. Side by side, science deals with mere happiness, where religion deals with the unity, humanity, universal brotherhood and thereby paves the way how to bring all the Nations under a single umbrella. Though, in some religions, ritual performances are admitted, the language of religion deals with the theoretical part—ground, distinctive features of language. Here the crucial issues are: (1) whether the statements of religion bear any cognitive value or how the statements of religion are linked with the reality as religion is concerned with the transcendental world and our faculties of knowledge—sensitivity and understanding are failed to go beyond the real world. (2) if the religious statements are devoid of any cognitive value, then the reality of the God is obscured. It may be concluded that Reality should not be understood only from the perspective of knowledge which is the subject of verbal communication, because performative utterances, in religion, have also the power to vibrate the message for the humankind through which the world may tootle the tune of Peace.

ⁱWhen a man says or writes something, there are many different ways in which his performance may be judged. Among other things, we may question his truthfulness or criticize his style, we may assess the morality of what he says, or we may appraise its logic; though not all these types of assessment are appropriate to all kinds of utterance. The words ‘logical’ and ‘illogical’ are themselves among the words of logical appraisal. If you call a discourse logical, you are in some degree commending it. If you call it illogical, you are, so far, condemning it.—Strawson, P.F: An Introduction to Logical Theory, Methuen & Co., London, 1952, P-1

ⁱⁱBut Kant's intent, evident more from the use he makes of the notion of analyticity than from his definition of it, can be restated thus: a statement is analytic when it is true by virtue of meanings and independently of fact.—W.V. Quine, Two Dogmas of empiricism, The Philosophical Review, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Jan., 1951), pp. 20-43

ⁱⁱⁱMr. Wittgenstein begins his theory of Symbolism with the statement (2.1): “We make to ourselves pictures of facts.” A picture, he says, is a model of the reality, and to the objects in the reality correspond the elements of the picture: the picture itself is a fact.—Ludwig, Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico Philosophicus, Kegun Paul, London, 1922, P-9

^{iv}If good or bad willing changes the world, it can only change the limits of the world, not the facts; not the things that can be expressed in language. In brief, the world must thereby become quite another, it must so to speak wax or wane as a whole. The world of the happy is quite another than that of the unhappy. (6.43) Ludwig, Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico Philosophicus, Kegun Paul, London, 1922, P-9

^vSwamiji outlines two principles of reasoning as follows: (1) The particular is explained by the more general, until we come to the universal; and (2) The explanation of a thing must come from inside and not from outside. Religion should not shy away from these being rationally analysed on these two scientific principles.—Vireshananda, Swami (Ed.): Editorial: ‘All This Indeed Is He: He is the Universe’, Prabuddha Bharata, Vol.127, No.2, February, 2022, Advaita Ashrama, P-17

^{vi}(A.1) There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, that procedure to include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances, and further, (A. 2) the particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked. (B. 1) The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and (B. 2) completely. (Γ.1) Where, as often, the procedure is designed for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or for the inauguration of certain consequential conduct on the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must in fact have those thoughts or feelings, and the participants must intend so to conduct themselves, and further (Γ. 2) must actually so conduct themselves subsequently.—Austin, J.L: How to do things with the words, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1962, pp.14-15

^{vii}[https://meditationamontreal.org/en/2016/02/10/happiness-quotes-for-inspiration-and-profound-inner-peace/?](https://meditationamontreal.org/en/2016/02/10/happiness-quotes-for-inspiration-and-profound-inner-peace/)