
UNIT 1 RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this unit is to understand religious experience from a philosophic perspective. Religious experiences are basic to religions and so should be studied carefully. Religious experiences are often understood better by believers, and it is most likely easy for them to appreciate them. Although non-believers may be able to get knowledge of such experiences, they are often not considered too important in their sight. Our aim in this unit is to get a few glimpses of religious experiences, neither as believers or non-believers, but as academicians who seek to understand philosophy of religion. Thus by the end of this unit, you should be able:

- To understand the relevant concepts of religious experiences
- To differentiate them from ordinary experiences
- To be able to know the various types and the factors involved in religious experiences

1.1 INTRODUCTION

We humans are primarily dependent beings, pushing us into relationships. Relationships with human beings create societies and communities, and relationships with God or the Divine create religions. Our experiences in human relationships are quite often paradoxical. We experience unity and estrangement, power and dependency, membership in the society and alienation from it. Such paradoxical experiences cause us also to look beyond human relationships. One such act of 'looking beyond' is religious experience. Religious Experiences are the core of any religion. They inspire and act as the model to be followed. Very often Religious Experiences give an impetus to the individual or the community (for instance, the Pentecostal experience to the Disciples of Jesus, or the Buddha experience) and take the community ahead. As the nucleus or the epicentre of a religion, Religious Experience is carefully guarded and held high within the religious tradition. It is an ideal to be looked up to.

Religious experience is defined in many different ways by various scholars, each emphasizing a particular aspect. Norman Habel understands Religious Experience as out of the ordinary type of

experiences in which, within the setting of a particular religious tradition, a believer enters into a relationship with the sacred, or becomes aware of it. Such experiences could be either mediated (through rituals, special persons, religious groups, totemic objects, nature etc) or immediate (without any intervening agency)

In today's context of religions becoming rigid and institutionalized, growing fundamentalism and orthodoxy, it is essential to understand and relook at Religious Experiences of various traditions. Religious Experiences are also important as they justify religious beliefs (for instance, they are used to justify the existence of God). From a philosophical perspective, there is also a need to discover the importance, the factors and the wisdom embedded in Religious Experiences. This unit is a help and an introduction to such a process of discovery.

1.2 THE NEED FOR RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

Why do human beings enter into a relationship with sacred things? There are various theories answering this question. According to Emile Durkheim, humans seek religious experiences because humans are filled both with uncertainty and powerlessness, and dramatic and traumatic experiences teach them of their limited power (natural happenings). This view appears to be one-sided view. To say that the cosmic or natural objects or events serve only to symbolize social power is a bit far-fetched. According to Van der Leeuw, not only the unusual in nature, but also “a manifestation of immutably ordered regularity” can become a revelation of power- the power that lies behind ordinary things, “the power of the sacred world above”.

According to N.D.Fustel de Coulanges, in his book *The Ancient City*, there are two sources of religion – internal and external. The internal sources refer to the psychological projections of humans and religion expresses the subjective elements of their experience. The external factors refer to the reactions to natural forces. These objective and subjective aspects of reality experienced by humans are concerned with power(s) and religion is concerned with this. It seeks a deeper ground of reality or existence.

According to Edward Sapir, an American Anthropologist, humans seek religion and religious experience because they continuously seek spiritual serenity beyond the humdrum, confusion and the dangers of everyday life. There is a deep realization that ultimately we are powerless in this world and so, in order to gain some mystical security, one associates oneself with what can never be known. This leads to religious experience and religion. When this response to the ultimate sacredness is institutionalized in thought, practice and organization, there is religion. According to Paul Tillich, humans encounter the holy, something beyond themselves. This ‘something beyond’ draws them closer to sacred things. In a religious experience, the centrality lies in this encounter with the Ultimacy.

1.3 TYPES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

Religious experiences can be classified into four types: mystical, paranormal, charismatic, and regenerative.

Mystical Experiences

Mystical experiences occur when the believer discovers that he or she is not distinct from the cosmos, the deity or the other reality, but one with it. Although very difficult to define mysticism, it could be said to be an experience of union with the divine. Herein, there is no “otherness” and the believer becomes one with the transcendent. The believer is able to identify oneself completely with the other reality. Underhill defines Mysticism as “the science of ultimates, the science of union with the Absolute, and nothing else, and that the mystic is the person who attains to this union, not the person who talks about it. Not to know about, but to Be, is the mark of the real initiate.” William James describes four characteristics of mystical experiences – noetic, ineffability, transience and passivity, in his *The Varieties of Religious Experience*

Noetic: This is the cognitive aspect. Cognition could be understood as the reasoning part of the mind, but here it is not to be understood as simple rationality, but is to be understood as wisdom. Wisdom is a power of discernment that is able to assess the facts properly (its position, value and function), ranks them and organizes them into meaningful entities. This is the “insight” giving stage – revelations, illuminations, significant and important.

Ineffability: Words cannot sufficiently express the experience. It has to be experienced first hand and it cannot be transferred to another. A musical ear can experience a symphony and it cannot describe the experience to another and ask him/her to get that same experience. Very often the mystic finds that his experiences are given incompetent treatment.

Transience: Mystic experiences do not last long. Their occurrence is short-lived. (for example an apparition or a vision). Those who have an experience report the feeling of being in the present and have a distinct awareness of it.

Passivity: The seeker may take efforts to reach a stage where she/he can receive an experience, but when the experience occurs, the seeker is overtaken or overpowered by a superior force. For instance, one who is in trance has no more control over the self, a superior force has taken over. There could be then a secondary or alternative personality, such as prophetic speech, automatic writing, or the mediumistic trace. (take the e.g of *sami aadudal*)

All mystical experiences are not the same. There are unique characteristics of each type of mysticism. Zaehner identifies two distinctively different mystical experiences: natural and religious mystical experiences. Nature mystical Experiences (or panentheic or nature mysticism) are those in which one may experience a deep oneness with nature. Such experiences are different from the typical religious mysticism, because they are independent of any particular tradition. They are however, deeply spiritual experiences that can have lasting effects on those who experience them.

Even in religious mystical experiences not all experiences are the same. One may experience an identity with an impersonal absolute (monistic mysticism) as found in Advaita Vedanta. The Christians, would experience mysticism as an union or intimate relationship with a transcendent, personal Creator God. Such experiences depend much on their understanding of God or the Divine. In many such religious experiences, an experience of travelling beyond the body is also felt and an ecstasy is deeply realised. The mystic feels that his/her soul/spirit has left the body

and is now experiencing transcendental realities. Such an experience is also a characteristic of the shaman.

Paranormal experiences

These are less intense experiences unlike mystical experiences. It is also possible that sometimes these experiences can go unnoticed as in the case of unconscious telepathy. They can be described just as other ordinary experiences. However, they are not ordinary experiences either as they occur without the usual involvement of the senses. For instance, telepathy and clairvoyance take place without the usual means of communication. Some other paranormal phenomena like psychokinesis, precognition, materialization and levitation occur without the usual framework of time, space, and matter.

However, these experiences are considered less religious than that of mystical experiences. The above could be considered as one type of paranormal experience. A second type which involves certain religious phenomena is normally called spiritualistic. Apparitions or ghosts, mediumistic communications, out-of-the-body experiences come under this category. Some would understand this phenomenon as evidence for the reality of a spirit-world and life-after-death. Such types of experiences are normally discouraged in organized religions. For instance, Buddhism recognizes that in the path to enlightenment, such experiences would occur but these are to be left behind considering them as distractions and hurdles. In these experiences, God is considered to be outside, other than or beyond the believer. The sacred power takes possession of the believer and uses it as a medium to communicate messages to the outside world.

Charismatic experiences

Charismata is used to mean gifts or blessings given to individuals by God. In theistic religions, this is considered to be upon the founders, prophets, leaders and heroes of religions or religious movements. For instance, miracles, prophesying the future, healing ecstatic praying, exorcism etc are considered to be gifts bestowed upon a few by God. The Christians term this as 'spiritual gifts'. A few examples of this type of religious experience are recorded in the New Testament of the Bible – tongues-speaking, prophecy, revelatory dreams, knowing others' thoughts, healing powers, miracles etc. Those bestowed with such gifts are holy men and women. They are found in almost all religious traditions – prophets and saints in Judeo-Christian tradition, walis in popular Islam, sheiks and pirs in Sufi Islamic traditions, gurus, sadhus, acharyas in Hinduism. In non-theistic religions like Buddhism, monks or holy persons also have charismatic experiences. These are blessings of the Dhamma and should not be used for personal gains but for compassionate purposes only for the well-being of humanity.

Max Weber, in his "The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation, defines Charisma as "... a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader".

According to him, Charisma has three characteristics:

Charisma was unusual – radically different from the routine and the ordinary and everyday

Charisma was spontaneous- in contrast to stable, established forms and it is a source of new forms and new movements

Charisma was creative in a fundamental sociological sense.

Charismatic experiences do not focus only on powers of healing, visions, speaking-in-tongues, revivals, messiah cults and prophetic movements. These, although extraordinary spiritual gifts, are not the only gifts. Other less-spoken but still important gifts such as wisdom, courage, peace of mind are also important in charismatic religious experience and these are also found in charismatic people. William James, pondering on saintliness affirms these gifts too. The charismatic people have classic signs of sanctity – devotness, purity, tenderness and charity, asceticism and poverty etc. James also warns that these elements can sometimes be overdone by excesses, due to over zealous and obsessive or fanatic thinking. Being aware of such extreme excesses, Buddha warned his followers and asked them to take a moderate midway.

Regenerative Experiences

One other category of religious experience is the experience of being ‘born again’. There are persons who experience being renewed, revived or ‘filled with new life’. Such persons take a new U-turn in their lives, begin fresh, add hope and new meaning into their lives and their quality of life improves. Such experiences could be placed under the category of regenerative experiences. Such experiences may be sudden or gradual, but in themselves are less extraordinary than paranormal and charismatic experiences.

Regenerative experiences occur at the time when there is a two-fold consciousness that happens simultaneously - A creature-consciousness and a Creator-consciousness. When one becomes aware of one’s own state of life in the beginning and in the present, guilt and remorse occur. The person realises his/her own status in the world - a creature, a created being. The person then also becomes aware of the Creator. This awareness is accompanied with feelings of fear and dread but also with feelings of attraction and fascination. This is Creator consciousness. The person is overpowered with a sense of worthlessness in the presence of the majestic Creator. When one experiences this, the need for conversion and regeneration grows and the response of the person is an arousing or an awakening within- the experience of beginning a new life. This type of experience is generally had by ordinary people who continually gain meaning through such experiences.

Some also ‘turn over a new leaf’ when they have some escape or deliverance from evil, or bad health, or a sudden or gradual escape from death or injury. Such events are considered as more-than-natural event, and the one who experiences (or the community that experiences) attribute this to God being in favour of them. Such regenerative experiences bring about a religious rebirth, not only in the spiritual and physical life, but more visibly in their moral lives.

Another variety of regenerative experience is the inner feeling of compulsion to follow a new way of life, or to take up a new course of action. This feeling is accompanied by a strong conviction that although the future course is unclear and the task ahead is risky, strength and guidance from the divine would follow. The faith in a never-abandoning God and the continued assurance of the grace of God makes this experience stronger. This is sometimes called as a ‘call’, or a ‘vocation’ or ‘divine commissioning’, ‘God’s will’, etc. Another word that is also

used for such experiences is Spiritual Awakening. It is also used to denote any of the above four mentioned religious experiences.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.s.

1) Why do human beings enter into a relationship with sacred things?

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2 Explain the four types of Religious Experiences.

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1.4 FACTORS INVOLVED IN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

There can be several factors involved in Religious Experience which can be of help in identifying such experiences. With the help of a few thinkers, such factors are identified in this section.

Richard Swinburne

In his book Faith and Reason, Richard Swinburne asserts that all Religious Experiences fall into five categories. The first category is a Religious Experience in which a believer 'sees the hand of God at work'. Such experiences are explicable and are public in nature. E.g., looking at a beautiful sunset. The second category of Religious Experience is one which is still in the public domain but is an unusual event that is considered breaching the natural law. E.g. walking on water. The third category is a private Religious Experience which is describable in a normal language. E.g. Jacob's vision of a ladder in the Old Testament of the Bible. The fourth category is a private Religious Experience but one that is indescribable. E.g. a mystical experience. The fifth category is more general. It is non-specific and general in nature. This category is for such Religious Experiences where one feels the working of God in one's own life.

Martin Buber

We have two types of relationships: I-It and I-thou. As members of this world, we have a relationship with the world which is slightly more than a mere technical or mechanical relationship. An I-It type of relationship is a relationship in which I, the subject, view the other as an object. An I-thou type of relationship is a relationship in which I treat the other also as a subject. This second type of relationship is primary in human experiences, which also extends to

the non-human world, in which an integrated approach is found – emotive, imaginative, intuitive, rational etc. In an I-Thou relationship, there is a response to a Presence, which is beyond the visible objects or beyond appearances. Religious experiences are such responses to the Presence, that is beyond sense-perception and ordinary common-sense knowledge.

Georg Simmel

Our ordinary experiences involve attitudes and relationships. When such attitudes and relationships are deepened, refined or heightened, different experiences occur. Science occurs as a refinement and a completion of the various tools and methods used in ordinary life situations. An artistic experience occurs when the aesthetic elements get focused, isolated and heightened. A religious experience occurs when faith and relationships are isolated and heightened. Religion is based on relationship. In this isolated and heightened relationship, there is a peculiar mixture found. Selfless surrender and fervent desire, humility and glorification, concreteness of the senses and abstractness of the spiritual take place in religious experiences.

Joachim Wach

Wach, a sociologist, offers four universal criteria involved in identifying a religious experience: First: In religious experience, a single or finite phenomenon is not responded to, but what is realized is the foundation or the base upon which our world of experience is built upon. This is experienced as the ultimate reality. Second: In this experience, what is involved is not exclusively the mind or the will, but the total and integrated, holistic personality. Third: Religious experience is one that is intense of the highest order that humans are capable of. All expressions of religious experience may not be that intense but are pointers towards this factor. This intensity can be found in religious loyalty. Of all other loyalties, religious loyalty wins the best. Fourth: Religious experience is different from other experiences as it involves not mere admiration as in aesthetic experience, but an imperative, a commitment leading to action and morality.

Emile Durkheim

Religious experience is an experience of the sacred. Developing this idea of the sacred, Durkheim in his book *The Elementary Forms of the Religious life*, brings out the Characteristics of the sacred. Fundamentally, he argues that the sacred is different and opposed to the profane. Sacred is superior to the profane: Human experience can be divided into two: Sacred and the profane. The sacred is superior to the profane in dignity and it expresses a superior seriousness. Rites and rituals in religions are not performed primarily to achieve something, but to express an attitude. Religion is an attitude towards the sacred and it has no other hidden agenda.

The Sacred recognises the belief in a power or force. When sacredness is attached to a symbol, or an object, it is indeed to the power that it symbolises or that it holds. The Sacred is ambiguous. The Sacred contains both contrasting factors: physical and moral, human and cosmic or natural, positive and negative, propitious and unpropitious, attractive and repugnant, helpful and dangerous to humans. The Sacred is non-utilitarian. Work belongs to the realm of the profane. Utility and everyday affairs do not belong to the space of sacredness. The Sacred is non-empirical. Sacred quality is not intrinsic to objects but is conferred on them by religious thought and feeling. It is superimposed upon it. The Sacred does not involve knowledge. It is not a knowledge that is based on the experiences of the senses. The Sacred strengthens and sustains

the believers. Worshippers and believers draw strength from the sacred, because it exalts them and raises them above their own selves. The Sacred makes a demand on the believer and the worshipper. There are some obligations made on the believer, especially on the moral side. Certain do's and don'ts come up on the believer, as part of the understanding of the sacred.

Rudolf Otto

There are three types of feelings: the feeling of dependence that arises from the fact that we are mere creatures and we are submerged and overwhelmed by our own nothingness, the feeling of religious dread or awe, and the feeling of longing for the transcendent being that fascinates us. Religious Experience is an experience of these three feelings. In his book *The Idea of the Holy*, Otto analyzes the term holy. Holy or Numinous cannot be reduced to mere ethical norms; it is something beyond rational or ethical goodness. Holy is close to Hb qadōsh, Gk ayios and Lt sanctus or sacer. This refers to the “innermost core” of all religion. The holy is a “pre-eminently living force”. An experience of the holy is an experience that involves awe. There is awe because of a great sense of mystery surrounding life – this can only be experienced in feelings. There is admiration combined with fear of the “wholly other”. There is fear and admiration, horror and fascination, terror and attraction. The holy is thus “the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*”.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.s.

1) What are the opinions of Richard Swinburne and Emile Durkehiem on Religious Experience?

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2) How does Rudolf Otto understand the *NUMINOUS*?

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1.5 METHODIC CULTIVATION OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

Yoga

The Indian system of Yoga has been known for its rigorous practices. Yoga attempts to bring to the fore the higher nature of the person and in that stage, he/she can have a the highest religious experience, called Samadhi. Yoga proposes eight limbs to attain this stage. The body, in Yoga, aids in this process of attainment of enlightenment. Breathing, exercises, diet, postures etc. cause the right atmosphere to reach a higher level of concentration, and consciousness. The practices prescribed in yoga help the mind to understand that it has a higher state of existence, a superconscious state, a state beyond reason. This is a mystical state.

Buddhism

The Buddhists use Dhyana to denote higher states of contemplation. There are four stages in Dhyana. In the first stage, the mind concentrates on one point. It excludes desire, but not discernment or judgment. This is still intellectual. In the second stage, the intellectual functions are also excluded and there is a satisfaction of a sense of unity that remains. In the third stage, even this satisfaction is excluded and there is an indifference, along with memory and self-consciousness. In the last stage, the indifference, memory, and self-consciousness are perfected. Nirvana is then attained, where there exists absolutely nothing.

Sufism

The highest religious experience is cultivated by detachments. Detaching from the heart all that is not God, and meditation of God is the method of the sufis. A contemplative life that consists of humble prayers and on complete meditations on God is necessary for religious experience. Intuitions and revelations precede the highest – namely, a total absorption in God.

Christianity

“Orison” or meditation is the methodical elevation of the soul towards God. The first thing to be done is to detach the mind from outer sensations because they disturb the concentration of ideal things. The concentration on holy scenes, such as the spiritual exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola, would then fill the mind. This will lead eventually to move higher and even shed off these imageries. The consciousness is so enraptured that verbal description becomes impossible. This is ‘union of love, as John of the Cross would term it, which is attained by ‘dark contemplation’.

1.6 CASES OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

A few representative examples of individual religious experiences from a few traditions and periods will show the intensity and the impact of the experiences on the individual and their communities

The Lutheran Experience

Martin Luther, an important figure of the 16th Century Protestant Reformation, was struck to ground by a bolt of lightening in a thunderstorm. He prayed to St Anne and vowed that he would become a monk if he was saved. He was saved and he joined the monastic life. As he grew, he was not satisfied with the medieval way to salvation that included confessions, charitable works, and sacraments. During 1513-19, while being at Wittenburg, he lectured elaborately more on the Psalms and letters to the Romans and Galatians. This helped him to realize and discover a new meaning of the Gospel of Christ. This was his religious experience. He now found an answer to his constant quest, namely, how can one stand in holiness before the demanding righteousness of a just God? He discovered that a life led by faith, which is itself a gift of God, is the answer. God justifies us by faith. This discovery made him feel like a new born person and he felt he entered paradise itself.

The Buddha Experience

Gautama Buddha, hailed from a noble family in India. As he grew up without knowing many realities of life, his first exposure to the harsh realities of life, pain and suffering, made him raise

several questions. Searching for the right and the most satisfying answers, he joined several others who were also in their spiritual sojourn. He gained extensive knowledge of the Vedas and the Upanishads, and practised extreme asceticism. However, even after six years, he could not find answers. Then, he sat in deep meditation with a determination to find answers for his search. During these meditations, he was enlightened. This unique religious experience that he had left on him and on the wider society a deep indelible mark. He had now moved to a state of pure consciousness. He understood and realized several realities, the chief of which being the Four Noble Truths. He shared this experience of enlightenment with others and this was the foundation of a new religious movement- Buddhism.

The Zen Experience

A Japanese version of Buddhism, this type of meditational practice is gaining more attention today. True reality is within oneself. When one experiences this, he/she would be able to understand the reality outside better. Such an experience is in Zen language – ‘awakening’. This intuitive enlightenment comes only with a rigorous self-discipline under the care of a master. This self discipline has many forms – meditation, archery, judo, etc. This experience is unique and personal. A pure selfless being emerges at enlightenment, and one feels that all beings are primarily Buddhas.

The Pentecostal Experience

This religious experience is found in the Bible, Acts of the Apostles (2:4). The apostles and the disciples of Christ, filled with fear, locked themselves up in a room in Jerusalem. While being at intense prayer, they were suddenly filled with the Holy Spirit and they ‘began to speak in other tongues’. They then opened the door, and now filled with courage and strength, spoke to the other Jews and many who heard them speak in their own language were astounded. In modern times the emphasis on such an experience is being found in many groups. Speaking in tongues, healing, ecstatic prayer, witnessing etc are expressions of such experiences.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.s.

1) Can Religious Experience be attained through training?

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2) Give a few cases of Religious Experiences.

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1.7 LET US SUM UP

Religious Experience, as the core of a religion, has an important role in the life of a believer. Several factors that determine Religious Experience contribute to its uniqueness. Faith and Belief in the Divine, with a firm quest for the Divine is a basic necessity to prepare oneself for a Religious Experience, although the experience itself may dawn at the most unexpected moment. Although there are several types of Religious Experiences, all of these point to a term of relationship with the Divine. Such a relationship, when firm and strong, reaches a climax with a Religious Experience, and leaves a lasting impression in the mind of the one who receives it. It also leads to a different approach to life in the society. While some experiences are private, a few are public, but the quality of the Religious Experience is often known through the life one lives thereafter. This unit was an exposition of the various aspects of Religious Experiences – the need, the types, the factors involved, and its methodic cultivation. Giving some samples of persons who have had Religious Experience, this unit has shown how Religious Experience also brings about a dynamic and charismatic effect in the surrounding.

1.8 KEY WORDS

Religious Experience: an out-of-the-ordinary experience, within the setting of a religious tradition, in which the believer enters into a DEEP relationship with the Divine or God, either through some means or directly.

Numinous: holy

Mystical Experience: an experience in which the believer becomes “one” with the divine.

1.9 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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UNIT 2 RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE

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2.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this chapter is to have an understanding of the need and importance of philosophical reflection with respect to the religious language. This chapter carries out the historical and philosophical significance of the introspection thinkers carried out with respect to religious language. As one or the other religion is prevalent in entire humanity as such at all times, we will be carrying out an overall study of the different thinkers' viewpoints with respect to religious language in both the Indian and Western tradition. Thus, this chapter attempts to make the readers equip with the need and necessity of the philosophical reflection of religious language. At the end of this chapter, you may be in a position

- to have a basic understanding of the need of philosophical reflection of religious language
- to have acquainted with different philosophers' understanding on the issue of religious language
- to have a conceptual clarity of the different functions of religious language
- to have an overall grasp of the issue of religious language

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Why one is to study the nature of religious language? What is special about religious language? Or is religious language and ordinary language the same? Essentially, the discussion in religious language pertains to one basic issue as to what we can say about God. In the broadest sense, the religious language discussions are based on what is the nature and function of the language that is employed in religious literature. The discussion is carried out not only in western tradition, but also in Indian and in other traditions as well. I will try to focus on Indian and western traditions with respect to their concerns on the nature of religious language. In order to make this issue more concrete, let us try to take few examples and start the analysis. Find below some of the passages from Vedas and Bible

In the prayer to the cosmic Being, '*purusa*', the prayer starts with the following description - "A thousand heads has the Universal man, Purusha; as also a thousand eyes and a thousand feet He

has. He spreads over the earth on all sides and beyond it as far as ten fingers can count.” (Purusa Sookta- Rigveda -10.90)

“The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry; the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth. The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all; he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.” (Psalm 34:15-20)

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?’” (John 11:25-26)

What is the nature of these types of utterances? How do we make sense of these descriptions about the divinity? Or how are we to understand those religious utterances that talk about God. For example, how does God have thousand heads and thousand eyes and thousand feet? Similarly, what type of description it is, when we talk of God’s eyes and ears? What does it mean to say that those who believe in God will live forever? Does it make sense? If so, how we should make sense of it?

In the context of religious language discussion, for those types of descriptions of God, which apparently do not have any such problem in understanding the meaning as well, there too we find it difficult to see how certain descriptions can be ascribed to God. Suppose, when we say that God is kind, good, merciful, loving, etc, do we mean it the same way as we use the terms for our ordinary human experiences like saying that person X is kind and loving or person Y is good. That means the attributes like kind, love, caring, good, etc carry the same meaning when we apply in the context of humans and divinity? If they carry the same meaning, then how do we differentiate Godly attributes with humans? If they are different, then how do we understand the meanings of kind and good with respect to God? The reason for such type of a problem is that God is considered to be one supreme reality without differences. If God is infinite and transcendent, then how that infinite, timeless and transcendent supreme power be predicated with qualities like kind, good, etc, which we ascribe to normal human beings?

More so, if they are attributes, are they essential or accidental attributes of God? If we apply the attribute of ‘kind’ to God, then does it mean the same like we say that ‘X is kind’? Moreover, there is a possibility that ‘X may not be kind as well, but can we think of God not being kind? This implies that the attributes we give to human beings may be an accidental one (without that attribute also, they can be), whereas the attributes we give to God cannot be accidental (without that attribute, it cannot be). It becomes an essential and inherent attribute of the God. These are some of the issues about which thinkers were concerned when they reflect upon the nature of religious language. In this context, when we use the language to describe God, when we predicate God, how are we to understand those utterances?

2.2 UNIVOCAL AND EQUIVOCAL ANALOGICAL

Thinkers, particularly religious philosophers differed on the way to understand the language used in religion in order to address the above mentioned issues. Traditionally, the answers to the process of understanding the religious language were done in three different modes.

Univocal language

This position states that one should have the same meaning in whichever context that word is employed. The words that are employed in the language carry the same meaning throughout irrespective of the context or situation in which it is used. For example, suppose I say, white board, white chalk, white sari, etc. in all these cases, the 'white' refers to the same thing, the color white. In the medieval thought, John Duns Scotus (1266-1308) proposed this particular view with respect to the religious language. In the context of religious language, this position argues that terms when they are used either with reference to God or with reference to human beings, must mean the same. If it doesn't be the same univocal meaning, it will be difficult to understand what it means in the context of God. This approach would argue that God is good in the same sense in which it is used in the human context. Suppose, the word 'kind' is used in a different sense as compared to it being used in a human context, then how could we ever understand what does it mean to say 'kind' in the context of God? But the basic problem of how the same predicate be attributed with the same meaning to God as well as human beings is a major problem for the univocalists to address.

Equivocal language

This position states that the words that are employed in the language carry different meanings depending upon the context and the situation in which it is being used. There can be two senses in which a word may mean differently in different context. One is called as *homonym*, where the same word actually refers to two or more things, which causes confusion in understanding its meaning. For example, the word 'Bat' is used to refer to cricket bat as well as to a flying mammal. Similarly, the word 'light' refers to objects not so heavy and at the same time; also refers to one physical property 'light'. While the equivocal nature with respect to such types of words can be sorted out by finding which meaning that word corresponds to, by understanding the context, the equivocal nature with respect to religious language takes the position that terms do mean differently with respect to God as against human contexts. As mentioned earlier, when we use the word 'kind' it cannot have the same meaning with respect to God and the human being. So, the meaning has to be different. If the meanings are different, then how can one make sense of the meaning when he makes a positive assertion about God that 'God is kind'? According to equivocalists, definitely it can't be the same sense as univocalists claim that there has to be only one sense of the word with respect to 'kind' in both the human and the divine context. The problem for equivocalists is that they cannot admit of single unique sense of the words employed in religious language, like the univocalists do, and at the same time, they have to tackle the problem of understanding the meaning of the word, if they have two different senses altogether with respect to divine and human context. And because there is a problem in making sense with respect to different senses of the word, one can think of the corollary of equivocal position that will lead to describe God in the negative way.

This position speaks of a negative way in understanding God. That is, we can be more certain of what God is not, rather than be certain of what God is. This element of thought was not quite prevalent in the West as in the case of Indian philosophy. In the Indian context, the Absolute is conceptualized as that which is beyond any definition. Sankaracharya (788 – 820) mentions in the commentaries of Brhadaranyaka Upanisad that words denote things through one or the other of the following: name, form action, distinction, genus and quality; but in Brahman (Absolute Reality) there is none of these differences and hence it cannot be described. Whatever

descriptions we have of the Supreme Being, it cannot be the true description. It is more prudent to describe in a negative way than the positive way. The path of describing Brahman in the negative as '*neti, neti*' (not this, not this) is a well established method of describing the Supreme Being in Indian tradition. Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon (Maimonides) (1135-1204) is one of the most famous proponents of this doctrine in the Western Medieval thought.

2.3 ANALOGICAL WAY

Analogical language:

This position tries to maintain a mid-way between the univocal and the negative approach of describing the Reality. In the medieval period, St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was using this principle to explain our understandings with respect to predicates of God. Basically, analogy is used in language to show the similarity or the likeness between two entities or descriptions. Thomas Aquinas uses this principle to show the likeness between God and the humans. Aquinas subscribed to the view that God is not a being like any other being. Hence, the univocal function of language employed in religion, according to him, may not work. But, Aquinas at the same time does not want to take a purely negative way of understanding Godly attributes. He in a sense strikes a balance between the univocal and equivocal way of understanding the religious statements, which translates in to an analogical way.

In the Indian context too, an attempt was made to understand the religious language through a metaphorical or secondary meaning. While, the univocal meaning, which in Indian context is called as *vacyartha* (literal meaning), is not sufficient enough for the descriptions in relation to Divinity and the equivocal way resulting in the negative descriptions of Reality, some attempts were made to give a positive description without getting into the problem of univocal and equivocal way. The Indian grammarians came up with the concept of secondary meaning, which was adopted by some other Indian philosophical schools as well. These secondary meanings are called metaphorical meanings or *lakshyartha*. When the words in the sentences refer to their literal meaning, but such literal meaning does not appear to make sense and hence when one looks for the secondary meaning, then it is called as *lakshyartha*. Classic example is 'a hamlet in the river Ganges'. In this example, as there is no possibility of a hamlet being in the Ganges, we have to look for secondary meaning, which may suggest that the hamlet is very close to the bank of the river Ganges. Even in our daily utterances also, we use such types of expression. When we say, "Sachin Tendulkar is God of Cricket", what we mean is not a literal meaning of the words in the sentences, we may mean Suchin Tendulkar as being as close to perfect in playing Cricket.

This theory was quite important amongst all philosophical schools that try to describe the nature of ultimate reality which is in a sense beyond expression. "Metaphorical meanings which are based on the literal meanings are helpful in extending the range of expression without making the idea too vague for objective communication". Thus, there is a systematic and serious attempt to understand the religious language through the secondary meaning, thereby making the statements about God as meaningful.

Talking about Aquinas, he explains analogy in two different ways. One is the analogy of 'attribution' and the other is the analogy of 'proportionality'. Aquinas uses the analogy of 'attribution' to explain the attributes of God. Suppose we use the example, 'he is healthy' and another sentence 'medicine is healthy'. The way we use to say a person being healthy is not the same way we use to say medicine being healthy. While we use the word 'healthy' with respect to

person in a literal sense, we use the word 'healthy' with respect to the medicine in a causal sense. In the similar fashion, when we say that 'X is kind' and 'God is kind', we use them analogically. The analogical relation here means that as God is the cause of everything in the world, every predicate can be virtually attributed to Him. So, when we talk of attributes like kind, love, etc in human context, the same can be meaningfully applied in the context of Divine as well as He being the cause of all those predicates like love, kind, care, etc.

In the analogy of 'proportionality', it talks of a relative relationship between the God and its creatures. Suppose we say that a man and woman are faithful to each other and we also say that a dog is faithful. We for sure know that the way we mean that man and woman are faithful to each other is definitely not the same way in which we say that dog is faithful. But, at the same time, there is a similarity existing between those elements of faithfulness between the man and the woman and between the dog and the master that makes us to understand, analogically the idea of faithfulness that is exhibited in the dog as well. Just as the dog participates in the idea of faithfulness partially to its extent possible in proportion to human, similarly the humans participate proportionally in the divine attributes in proportion to God. John Hick (1922-) gives this example to illustrate the idea of proportionality.

2.4 LOGICAL POSITIVISTS AND WITTGENSTEIN

While the prominent discourse on religious language in the medieval period was with respect to the issue of how to understand the meaningfulness of religious utterances, there was not much debate to consider whether the religious utterances are 'really' meaningful. So, most of the time in the medieval period, there was not much issue with the question of cognitive content of religious language, the discussion was only to find out how to cognize the content of the religious language. The former issue, if religious language was meaningful at all, was taken more seriously in the 19th century, particularly taking the cue from David Hume's (1711 – 1776) work. David Hume belonging to the empiricist tradition of philosophy, says regarding religion and divinity in his work *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* thus, "If we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."

This outright rejection of religious and metaphysical works by Hume as sophistry and illusion and which doesn't have any significant cognitive value, was carried further by the Logical Positivists. The Logical Positivists, also called as Vienna Circle, were a group of thinkers, philosophers who were primarily concerned with the truthfulness of any statement. They embarked on a project of coming out with a criteria of verification. They were bothered about finding the principle by which one can say that a statement X is meaningful or not. Their focus is on finding the principle which makes a statement to be meaningful and thereby sensical. And those statements which are not meaningful are deemed non-sensical and they are set aside as they will not have any cognitive value, that is, knowing those non-sensical statements will not have any improvement in our gaining of knowledge. The group was started by one philosopher

by name Moritz Shlick (1882-1936) and some of the important thinkers of that group were Rudolph Carnap, Friedrich Wiseman, Otto Neurath, and others.

The significance of the logical positivists with respect to our discussion is that in their pursuit of showing the meaningful statements, they relegated any talk about God and Godly attributes as utterly meaningless. For them, the religious language is nonsensical in nature. While the equivocalists were rejecting the language of descriptions with respect to God in order to maintain His purity, the same cannot be said for Logical Positivists. They rejected the entire episode of religious utterances as nonsensical and meaningless, maybe without any serious commitment to the God's supreme and transcendent nature. The group influenced thinkers like A J Ayer who came out with a verifying principle to employ it in religious language to show that they are meaningless statements.

While we talk about Logical Positivists, we need to talk about a philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) who influenced the Logical Positivist School to a great extent, but, who by himself was not committed to their ideology. Wittgenstein's work *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus* (shortly *Tractatus*) mentioned clearly about the function and the limits of the language. According to him, the function of the language is to picture the reality and the sense of the language lies in its ability to mirror the world of experience. Any language which does not picture the reality is treated as non-sense and in this way; the religious language and even the metaphysical language were deemed non-sensical. Wittgenstein in his *Tractatus* says, "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world". In the same line, he says, "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent". With this clear demonstration of the limits of language, Wittgenstein categorized the language of religion, morals, etc to the realm of non-sensical and meaningless. This phase of Wittgenstein can be marked as the *early* Wittgenstein.

While, the logical positivists thought that non-sensical statements do not have any significant purpose in our life and hence statements about God do not have any specific meaning and hence useless, but, Wittgenstein himself was maintaining that that which is meaningless and non-sensical is what matters most. This difference in position with respect to the significance of non-sense leads to the friction between Wittgenstein and Logical Positivists. We will come back to this enigmatic philosopher later when we are to discuss a position totally against the Logical Positivists' position. However, taking the cue from *early* Wittgenstein, Logical Positivists proceeded further. According to Logical Positivism, there are two types of sentences which have meaning. One is the Analytic propositions and the other is the synthetic propositions. Analytic propositions are those meaningful propositions which derive their meaning by the virtue of their definitions. Broadly, mathematical and logical statements do come under this category, e.g. $3+3=6$. Synthetic propositions are those meaningful propositions which derive their meaning on the basis of our sense experience. They are meaningful because we can able to confirm the sentence's meaning on the basis of the possibility of our sense experiences. Example, this grass is green; There is a railway track by the side of my house, etc. Since religious statements do not fit in any of these two categories, they are relegated as meaningless.

2.5 VERIFICATION PRINCIPLE AND FALSIFICATION PRINCIPLE

Two principles made a strong case against the meaningful nature of religious language. One is the 'verification principle' of A J Ayer and the other is the 'falsification principle' of Anthony Flew.

A J Ayer (1910-1989), was a British philosopher who came out with the 'principle of verification'. For him, 'A statement which cannot be conclusively verified cannot be verified at all. It is simply devoid of any meaning.' If we adopt the two categories (analytic and synthetic propositions) alone to be meaningful, which was according to Ayer as well, the two possibilities of any sentence to be meaningful, then what can be the nature of the descriptions of God? Can statements about God be analytical or can it be synthetic? Ayer opines that since metaphysical and religious statements do not correspond to either analytical or synthetic, they are meaningless. They are non-sensical. And any utterances related to them do not carry any meaning and hence they are to be discarded. As A.J. Ayer says, "The term 'god' is a metaphysical term. And if 'god' is a metaphysical term, then it cannot even be probable that God exists. For to say that 'God exists' is to make a metaphysical utterance which cannot be either true or false. And by the same criterion, no sentence which purports to describe the nature of a transcendent god can possess any literal significance." Thus, Ayer does not only reject God's existence and any utterances related to God, but, rather he rejected any possibility of making religious utterances meaningful as those utterances do not come under the principles of verification. This has put the religious language as those set of meaningless sentences which are in the guise of language but do not have any feature necessary to be language.

Anthony Flew (1923-2010), another British philosopher, comes out with the idea of falsification. In his article, 'Theology and Falsification', Flew comes up with the idea that religious language are meaningless as they cannot be falsified. Falsifiability is the other side of the coin of the verifiability. Flew opined that religious statements can be cognitively meaningful, if we can able to think of some evidence that can falsify it. That is, if a statement has to be meaningful, then there should be a way to falsify that statement. If there is no way to falsify that statement, then that statement cannot be meaningful. Can religious statement be falsified? If falsified, then they are meaningful, if not, then according to Flew, they are meaningless.

Suppose we have a religious statement that "God loves all humans" and if we see so much of suffering happening in this world, (we do see!), then immediately we question that if God loves all humans, then why there should be so much suffering. If the answer is that the God loves all human beings is false, then Flew would accept that it is a meaningful language and therefore the religious language is meaningful. But, most of the times, the religious believers will not accept that God loves all humans as false, though there is lots of suffering. On the other hand, they may try to say that the way God loves us is different from the way we understand love. This in a sense either suggests that the words are equivocal, used in different meanings or more so, suggests that there is no way to falsify this statement, hence according to Flew meaningless.

The non-cognitive nature of religious language is because of the reason that it cannot substantiate its position with respect to verification and falsification criteria. Is there any other way, by which we can prove that religious statements are cognitive? Or is proving that religious language as cognitive is the only way to make them as meaningful?

2.6 RESPONSES TO VERIFICATION AND FALSIFICATION PRINCIPLE

Religious thinkers and philosophers tried to defend their position against verification and falsification principles. It is not that verification principle is an error proof principle. Though, I do not want to go to the intricacies of the argument, but it is suffice to say that Ayer's verification principle faced serious objections. One rudimentary refutation is that the statement of the principle of verification itself cannot be verified according to the principle of verification. Moreover, Ayer's position with respect to genuine factual proposition, that is, the principle of verification for a statement, which was articulated in both his first and more sophisticated version in the second edition of his book *Language, Truth and Logic* has been questioned and rejected.

With the rejection of the verification principle, how can one understand the religious language? The rejection of verification principle also suggests that one need not take religious utterances as purely meaningless. The meaninglessness of religious language is only on the basis of verification principle and if the verification principle itself is refuted, then it indirectly suggests at least the possibility of religious utterances being meaningful. So, how can the religious utterances be meaningful? There are different strands of thought in relation to the aspect of finding the meaningfulness of religious language as against the verification and falsification criteria.

Paul Tillich (1886-1965), understands the meaning of religious language with a difference he made between signs and symbols. Let us take the case of a bottle written on top that it contains 'sugar'. This is a sign for Tillich because it merely signifies what is contained in the bottle. The meaning of the sign is derived from what is contained in the bottle, whereas, a symbol, like 'Aum' or 'Cross' do not only signify the divinity, but also participates in it. Put it in this way, the symbol 'Aum' or 'Cross' is as much sacred as the divinity itself, like our national flag has as much prestige as the nation itself. Our national flag symbolizes the nation. It participates in the prestige of the nation. Paul Tillich through these and similar examples was trying to show that religious language does not operate like a sign, which merely signifies like other ordinary language. Religious language participates in symbolizing the divinity. This suggests that the meaningfulness of the religious language has to be looked not only from the perspective of its significations; rather it should also be looked from its symbolizing nature. This means, the religious language's meaningfulness should not be based upon its verifiability criteria alone, but, its meaningfulness depends upon the symbolizing nature of the language itself, that is, what it means to the believers' why they use the religious language.

Remember Ludwig Wittgenstein, who made a significant contribution to Logical Positivists thought. The same philosopher, in his *later* phase had come up with another work *Philosophical Investigations*, which takes a different turn with respect to the nature of language and functions. While, Wittgenstein in his earlier stage maintained that language has sole function to perform that of picturing the reality and those language utterances which cannot perform such function is relegated as meaningless and non-sensical. Whereas, in the later stage, Wittgenstein denounced that role for language and came up with the notion that language have multiple functions to perform. To understand the meaning of an utterance in the language is to see, how it is being employed in the given context. He calls this aspect of language as language-game. The concept

of language-game has played a significant role in Wittgenstein's later philosophy. He arrived at this conception with the help of certain similarities between the various uses of language and the rules of various games. Just as there are varieties of games there are also varieties in linguistic usage. Any game for that matter is guided by a set of rules. Similarly, according to Wittgenstein, every linguistic-usage is guided by certain rules. For example, trebling a ball with hands is an allowed move in basketball, but the same is treated as a foul in football. A foul is nothing but trespassing of a rule which is established by way of a convention. What is more important in this game analogy is that a participant's view of the game is different from that of an observer. This twist in the position of the language broadens the discussion related to the understanding of religious language. The basic question now changes to why the meaningfulness of religious language should always be oriented towards whether it is verifiable or falsifiable? Rather the meaningfulness of the religious utterances and beliefs lies in the way it is being *used*. The crux of the argument is that language does not work on the basis of its meaning, whether it makes sense or not, rather it works on the basis of how it is used in our life.

What is the significance of language-game for our understanding of religious language? Wittgenstein maintains that the language employed in religious utterances need not be seen whether it corroborates with the facts or not. Let us take the examples with which we started. How does God have thousand heads and thousand eyes and thousand feet? Similarly, what type of description it is, when we talk of God's eyes and ears? What does it mean to say that those who believe in God will live forever? Does it make sense? If so, how we should make sense of it? For these types of religious statements, the sense do not depend upon if they are corroborating with the facts – that is, testing if a religious believer will ever die or not; or testing if God really has ears and eyes or not? These religious statements make sense by the way it regulates the person's (believer) life.

R.D. Braithwaite (1900-1990) believed that religious statements are moral in content and can therefore be verified as they can result in change of behaviour. While Wittgenstein gave the room for understanding religious utterances from a different standpoint away from the Logical Positivist traditions, by making the meaningfulness of the language on the basis of its use, Braithwaite extended this argument further by maintaining that the use of religious language lies in its moral content. In the similar vein to Wittgenstein, Braithwaite argued that religious assertions are based upon a commitment to live life in a particular way. Like Wittgenstein, he said that religious believers need not have to think whether the historical accounts of religious utterances are verifiable or not. For example, a Hindu need not really have to verify when Krishna was born and where He was born, similarly for Christianity as well. What really matters for him is that how Krishna wants us to live and what qualities and attitudes we have to inculcate in order to lead a religious form of life.

Similarly, for Flew's falsification principle as well, there are a good number of responses from the theological and philosophical community. One of the answers to the problem of Flew's falsification problem was given by R M Hare (1919 – 2002) an English moral philosopher. Hare suggested that instead of looking at religious statements to be capable of falsified or not, we have to see them as the point of reference from where the explanations, verifiability, falsifiability makes sense. That means, he is suggesting that religious language are in a sense beyond scientific cognition. Hare calls the religious statements are the outcome of our experience, which

he calls as *blik*. A *blik* according to him is an ‘unverifiable and unfalsifiable interpretation of one’s experience. Hare says, “. . . it is by our blik that we decide what is and what is not an explanation.” According to Hare, religious people have a religious *blik*. The religious people make their utterances from this religious *blik* standpoint. Hare explains his position through the parable of *Paranoid*. So, to get in the idea of falsifiability and verifiability of religious utterances do not make sense, because those criteria are offered from a different *blik* altogether, maybe a scientific *blik*. In a sense, Hare is agreeing to Flew’s falsifiability position, but he may not agree to Flew’s position of setting aside religious statements as meaningless and nonsense. What he agrees with is that it may be meaningless and nonsense from the scientific *bliks*, but, it may not be from the religious *blik*.

B G Mitchell (1917) was trying to respond to Flew’s position from a slightly different angle. He comes up with the parable of *Stranger* and tries to show that religious utterances do have cognitive meaning, but the truthfulness or falsity will be known only at the end. John Hick (1922) also tries to make a similar position when he says that all the matters of faith will be verified at the end of time. His theory thus suggests that religious statements are verifiable, but not in the present situation, but at the end of time, those beliefs can be verified. His theory is called as Eschatological Verification. John Hick in his work *Faith and Knowledge* uses the allegory of the Quest for Celestial City. In this, he narrates that a theist and atheist are walking on the same road. While the theists believe that there is a destination, a Celestial City, the atheists believes that there is no final destination and it is an endless road. The point is, if there really is a destination, then the theists belief is proved right, but, if there is no destination on the endless road, the atheists position cannot be justified as the road is endless, it can never be verified.

Thus, one can see a growth of literature in the philosophical reflection of religious language as possible answers and solutions keep sprouting from very many sources regarding the meaningfulness nature of religious language. In the attempt to defend and support the meaningfulness of religious language against the strict scientific criteria of verifiability and falsifiability, thinkers come out with novel and fresh way of looking at the whole issue. The way Wittgenstein showed with respect to the use of religious language takes us beyond the narrow confinements of issues related merely to the cognitivity of religious utterances. It in fact, leads to further discussions above and beyond the cognitivity of religious assertions that include understanding the multiple uses of religious utterances. The discourse pertaining to religious language thus gets enriched by these different contributors and one can take the finer aspect of philosophical speculations and sophisticated arguments in their works that shall generate a great amount of interest for any student of philosophy.

2.7 LET US SUM UP

In this chapter, we tried to understand the nature of religious language. Religious language posed a problem for the thinkers as understanding the meaning of the religious language was taken to be a serious issue of discussion. While in the medieval period, the issue of understanding the religious language was confined to the discussions of univocal, equivocal and analogical ways, in the modern period, the discussion was with respect to the meaningfulness and cognitive nature of religious language. The project of Logical Positivists and the challenges of verification and falsification principle made the meaningfulness of religious language in jeopardy. However,

thinkers like Wittgenstein, Tillich, Hare, Hick, and all tried to resist this challenge by offering different possible solutions to the problem by having a diverse perspective with respect to meaningfulness of religious language. The discourse pertaining to religious language expanded its domain, and still continues to generate a very high and interesting amount of literature in this domain of study.

2.8 KEY WORDS

Vachyārtha or *abhidhaa* - Primary meaning or literal meaning. For example – the word ‘pot’ referring to the actual entity pot.

Lakshyārtha – Secondary meaning or metaphorical meaning.

Non-sensical – Those sentences which cannot be verified

Blik – Unverifiable and Unfalsifiable interpretation of one’s life

2.9 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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UNIT 3 RELIGIOUS STRUCTURES AND INSTITUTIONS

Contents

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this Unit is to understand religious structures and their operational patterns from a philosophic perspective. Religious structures vary from religion to religion but some of the common features found in these structures can be identified. In this unit, some of these structures found in many religions have been presented and discussed. We expect that by the end of this Unit the student should be able:

- To understand some of the religious structures present and operational in religions
- To identify key ideas and world views found in these structures
- To be able to critically analyse religious structures and institutions

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In a world of diverse and various religious forms and expressions, it is pertinent to observe, understand and appreciate the various philosophies underlying these. The undercurrents of many of these religions find an outward manifestation both formally and informally. Dealing with formal expressions, one would find quite often strict and rigid structures within which the believer is 'tamed' or 'trained'. Some of these expressions or structures undergo changes as they encounter changing times and cultures, but some become too difficult to change, for they become institutions of their own within the larger framework of the religion. A study of a few important structures commonly found in some religions would enable us to understand the role that religions play in the growth process of each believer and the believing community.

3.2 PRIESTHOOD

This is one of the religious structures found in many religions. A priest is a religious official or animator or leader who is authorised by the community to perform religious rites, rituals and ceremonies, administer sacraments, or/and lead people spiritually. He/she is generally an expert in rituals, has some special acquired knowledge of spiritual matters, and has the techniques to conduct worship for believers that include incantations, prayers, sacrificial acts, songs, and other appeasing rituals.

Etymology

Etymologically, the word priest has its root in two words in Greek: a) presbyteros (Latin presbyter) meaning elder, and b) hierous (Latin sacerdos) referring to priests who offer sacrifice, such as the priesthood of the Jewish Temple, or the priests of pagan gods. Christ is considered as the High Priest in Christianity. The Sanskrit word Purohita meant placed foremost or in front, Charged, Commissioned, and appointed. This word is usually used by some groups in Hinduism.

There are several words used to denote priests. While some are common, others are special words. For instance, a Lama is a Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism, Magus is a member of the Zoroastrian priesthood of the ancient Persians, Shaman is one who acts as a medium between the visible and the spirit world and practices sorcery for healing or divination. There are some terms which denote seniority and hierarchy in certain religions, such as archpriest, high priest, bishop, etc. In Hinduism, the Purohit is a priest, generally of the Brahmin caste. Priests in many Christian denominations follow a strict hierarchy, the authority being passed on from traditions. Some religions like Islam and Sikhism do not strictly have priests, but are led by community leaders. The Muslims have local spiritual and community leaders such as the imam, the mullah, the mufti, the qadi, etc. Buddhism and Jainism do not have priests but the monks officiate various rites and rituals. The priests in Zoroastrianism are called as Navote. Many sects in Judaism do not have priests, but there are hereditary priests through paternal descent from the tribe of Levites, descendants of Aaron. Such priests are called as Kohanim. The rabbis are teachers and they hold congregational leadership.

The office of the priest

Priesthood, not uniformly found in all religions, is prevalent in many religions. A few common roles of priesthood are discussed below:

Initiator of dialogue between people and gods:

A priest initiates a dialogue between people and Gods through verbal prayers or non-verbal rituals or both. He stands as a reminder of the spiritual realm of the society and is often called upon to initiate the process of this spiritual aspect. This dialogue is at times initiated in a formalistic way, as in pujas or Masses, and at times informally, as in the case of raising spontaneous prayers at the funeral of a person (although even for such occasions, there are formal ways). As a leader of the religious community, it is his/her bounden duty to initiate such dialogues through prayers, rituals, feasts, ceremonies etc.

Intermediary between people and God:

A religious leader or a priest also plays the function of an intermediary and becomes the representative of the community. As a sacred agent, the priest is the visible representative of the gods or the divine beings. In ancient times, they were believed to hold the power to control or manipulate natural processes and events. As the community depends on nature for their survival, sustenance and well-being, the priests were held in high reverence, as they engaged in a sacramental relationship between humans and the divine. They were not like postmen or messengers, but were considered agents of sacred power. In some religions, the use of a sacred language is often used after formal training by the priests (or the priestly class). The work of the priest is to take to the gods the requests, the appeasements, the petitions, etc of the community and to return blessings, graces, commands etc. of the gods to the community. The priest is

considered to enjoy a social cum secular bond with the believing community and the Divine beings.

Defender of social and religious principles:

The office of priesthood has been considered important as it seeks to balance the sacred and the profane aspects of human society. Religious priests and leaders are also responsible for defending the social security of the believing community. When in distress or in trouble, defending the community from the forefront from attacks and criticisms, is also a key aspect in priesthood. Thus, during the Reformation period, priests of the Catholic Church tried to protect their faith and their faithful through various means. The social framework of a religious community is preserved through tradition and moral-spiritual values. The role of a priest assumes significance in such a social context too. Constant reminders, interpreting values and explicating social-spiritual-moral values and imparting them to the younger generations is one of the chief roles of the priest. He/she keeps the flock together. He is also responsible for perpetuating the sacred traditions, practices, doctrines and dogmas, beliefs and world views of the religion.

Powerful embodiment of valour and supreme order:

By his/her lifestyle, the priest embodies virtues and holiness and is a model to the rest of the believing community. They are courageous people who will stand for their faith and will even be willing to sacrifice their lives for the faith and supreme values. This would not mean that they are super-human beings, but leaders worth following. As people set apart, they held central positions in the social structure. This prestigious position as spiritual and social leaders is acknowledged when people turn to them in times of events beyond human control and where the divine or the sacred realm begins. At critical junctures of individuals, such as birth, puberty, marriage, death etc, and of communities such as flood, drought, famine etc, the priests are often sought after.

Ministers of public worship:

The priests are also ministers of public worship and involve in sacrifices, rites, sacraments, blessings and preside over rituals that re-enact creative, redemptive, or salvation events, etc. While others can wish blessings to one another, the priest, being sanctified and anointed, gives blessings to the faithful. The priest is also concerned with the practical aspects of religion, apart from preaching and teaching. He is also a spiritual administrator of the community.

Religious Power and priesthood

Priesthood is also associated with power, domination, guidance and charisma. Religious power is often exercised through religious priests or through other religious leaders. Clashes often have arisen over the supremacy of secular power over religious power or vice versa. Often secular power has sought its legitimacy from religious power. Conflicts between military nobility and priesthood have been recorded in history. Often clashes with the nobility- e.g states of Mesopotamia in Egypt and Palestine or the complete takeover of priestly positions by the secular nobility in the Hellenic city state, particularly in Rome, are some examples. In some countries, religious law reigns supreme and some religions are state religions. The power of the religious leaders in such countries (e.g. Iran) is greater than the governments. The theocratic states (a form of government in which a god or deity or religion is accepted as the highest rule of the state) consider their leaders to be divinely guided. Such governments are different from those governments that are only inspired and influenced by moral concepts of some religions.

Priesthood and seclusion:

In religions that consider priesthood seriously, the priests are often considered as 'special' and are 'set apart', for they are considered to be sacred. In Ancient Egypt and India, priests formed a separate caste. The Levites were a priestly tribe, instituted by the laws of Moses. In Catholicism, priests and bishops are entirely male and celibate. However, anyone can become a priest and the rigidity of a familial lineage is not present. This seclusion is often marked by a special ceremony called ordination. The priests are different in the sense, that their lifestyle and patterns are suited to the community.

This seclusion came with certain personal requirements too: Celibacy as in Roman Catholicism and the Arcakas of the Digambara sect in Jainism, asceticism in various Buddhist and Jain groups, personal religious experiences in some Protestant sects, etc.

3.3 THE SACRED

The concept

All religious structures have a strong concept of the sacred, which is distinguished from the secular or the profane. What 'belongs' to the Gods or the realm of the gods is considered as sacred. (The word *sacrum* means what belongs to the gods or was in their power). Hence, the deities and the images of Gods, the temples and other places, Godly values, the language used by the gods, etc. are considered sacred. The realms of the sacred are set apart by a boundary (real or virtual).

The word *profanum*, meant in front of the temple precincts. It was distinct from the location of the sacred. The Latin word *profanare* meant "to bring out" the offering "before the temple precinct" (the *fanum*) in which a sacrifice was performed. Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist, considered the concept of the sacred and the profane to be of the greatest importance while considering the characteristics of religion. According to him, "religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden".

Temporal aspects

Mircea Eliade gives a few temporal aspects in the phenomenon of the sacred and the profane:

Unchangeableness:

The sacred is absolutely unchangeable when it has extra-historical reasons for treating it as a metaphysical, eternal, or is a trans-historical reality. Historically speaking, this quality of unchangeableness and constancy are found in all those that religions consider as sacred - persons and communities, actions and words (written and uttered), natural objects and created objects, time and periods, places and stations, numbers and formulas, events and situations, In all these, a repetition or a reappearance of the ancient type (event or motive) takes place and they persist over periods of time.

Metamorphoses:

Metamorphoses means to change into a wholly different form or appearance, in other words, transform. The profane or the secular begins to appear as sacred or transcendental after metamorphoses takes place. This occurs in initiations, sacraments, and baptisms. It also appears in

the use of certain objects to symbolize the divine, such as stones to represent gods or shrines. Acts of blessing of an object, an act or a person also come into this category. Vice versa, a sacred becomes secular or profane, when it is used for a different purpose. When a religious myth is transformed from its religious context and meaning and is used as a piece of literature or as entertainment, when a religious act is used for imitation or dramatic enactment, then also metamorphoses is in place.

Destruction:

Quite often, religion and the sacred are intertwined and so the destruction of one may cause the other also to be destroyed. The realm of the sacred faces erosion when it is used too commonly in social intercourse. For instance, “God bless you” has become a social greeting than a religious blessing because of its excessive use in social realms. Such elements are found more in industrial societies and the sacred has been destroyed turning profane. However, when favourable conditions occur, the sacred always returns as its archetype always persists in the human spirit.

Restoration:

Every community that is intact and wishes to remain intact should need a notion of the sacred as a priori. In archaic societies - secret fraternities, magicians, shamans... In modern societies, public events like festivals, which generate social strength, or the establishment of monastic, elitist orders, or the creation of new centres of authority help the society to be intact and this restoration of the sacred is not only desirable but also advantageous to societies that are fragmented due to various social, economic and political reasons.

Sacred Space

A sacred place is a defined place, a space distinguished from other spaces. It is marked by rituals practised by people in that place or directed towards that place. Sacred space is like focusing lens- it focuses attention on the forms, objects and actions in it and reveals them as bearers of religious meaning.

There are different kinds of places:

Places that are constructed for religious purposes, such as temples.

Places that are religiously interpreted, such as mountains or rivers.

Spaces that can be entered.

Physically- as the outer geography of a holy land.

Imaginatively, as the inner geography of the body in Tantric yoga, or

Visually, as the space of a *mandala*.

Sacred space does not even exclude non-sacred space, for the same place may be both sacred and non-sacred in different respects or circumstances. (in Maori culture, latrine is both sacred and non-sacred: Sacred because it is the ritual place at which an unwanted spirit can be expelled or the help of the spirits obtained. And it is also a latrine). In short, a sacred place comes into being when it is interpreted as a sacred place. Places are sacred because they perform a religious function. Such religious functions create religious emotions of peace, joy, or satisfaction or a deep eagerness to do something for the divine. A sacred space is a symbol – a symbol of the relationship of humanity with divinity. At least three symbolisms arise:

Symbolism of the threshold

The threshold is the limit, the boundary, the frontier that distinguishes and opposes two worlds – the divine world and the sacred world. In the thresholds we have gods, spirits- as guardians that forbid entrance both to human enemies and to evil spirits. At this place, sacrifices are offered and judgments take place. These are also symbols of passage and vehicles of passage. Transcendence of the world of profanity takes place here. The sacred enclosure constitutes an opening in the upward direction and ensures communication with the world of the gods. Temples and other similar buildings add much importance to the doors or the main entry points, as this is a symbol of the threshold.

Symbolism of the centre

The concept of the centre is always important for the religious minded person. To such a person, life is the centre of existence and God is the centre of life. In the religious world, there are three cosmic levels of reality – the earth, the heavens, and the underworld. The centre is often symbolized by the imagery of a universal pillar. In the homogeneity of space, the sacred place constitutes a break. The break is symbolized by connecting the three worlds, so that passage between the three is made possible. Communication with heaven is often symbolized by a tower, pillar, ladder, mountain, tree, vine, etc. This *axia mundi* (the axis of the world) is located in the middle at the ‘navel of the earth’. The holy sites and sanctuaries are believed to be situated at the centre of the world. Temples are replicas of the cosmic mountain and hence they constitute a link between earth and heaven. The fountains in the temples link the earth and the lower regions.

Symbolism of cosmos and chaos

What makes a place sacred is consecration. Any place, when consecrated, becomes anew and the ‘dwelling place’ of the divine. Such a place is a symbol of the cosmos which is derived out of chaos. Many creation myths of various traditions portray the origin of the cosmos from chaos. There is orderliness in the cosmos which is depicted in the sacred place after its consecration. This orderliness has many dimensions- proximity and distance, hierarchy, size and shape, colour, etc. Sacred places are very often not “chosen” by humans, but are “determined” by past religious or virtuous events.

Sacred Time

Humans have two types of time- sacred and profane. Sacred time is observed in religious feasts and festivals, rites and rituals, ceremonies and observances. Profane time is the time of the ordinary everyday life. The concept of sacred time is confined only to the religious minded persons. Sacred time is a time when sacred events of the past (found in myths) are re-actualised, or re-enacted, or remembered with special formalities and observances. When one participates in sacred time, he/she is stepping out of ordinary time. Sacred time occurs periodically as sacred time is not considered linear (as in ordinary time) but as circular (which is why we have religious celebrations each year).

Illud Tempus

Illud Tempus is a phrase coined by Mircea Eliade, to mean the time of origins, the sacred time of the origin of the world. This origin of the world is accessed by the believer whenever he/she ritually re-enacts the cosmogonic myth (myth of the beginning of the universe). This ritual enactment is needed for the believer because this gives him/her inner strength. It is also needed

because by going back to the origin of time, everything becomes anew again. A state of reinstatement of the original harmony takes place by such 'going back'. This is not escapism, but a holistic participation in the cosmos for the well being of those living now in the present.

Myth

Myths, though a separate structure in themselves, are also part of the sacred time as they reveal through symbols and images, how the cosmos, and all that contains in it came to be. It tries to explain the 'how' and the 'why' of the universe's existence. It encapsulates all the theories and explanations understood by primitive minds. Each character in the myth is a rich symbol and is directly or indirectly related and connected to the sacred reality. They offer paradigms for understanding the reality of the world. They also play a didactic role, offering role models through the various gods and heroes involved. The moral functions that the myths connote can be better understood by those who come from the traditions from which these myths arose. Almost all rituals performed today have at least a myth associated with. While various motifs are associated with these rituals, a common factor found is the desire of the continuation of the myths, at least in subtle forms, in the present.

The Eternal Return

That the golden era would return again is the main motif of many repetitive rituals, festivals and observances that follow the cyclical nature of time. This not only brought the community together but also raised their spirits of hope and optimism. The connection with the sacred brought relief and strength to their otherwise battered and harsh reality, arising from changes in nature and human relationships. This cyclical concept of time was however, not acceptable to all civilizations. Hence, in religions like Hinduism, the cyclical nature of time would be brought to an end by a periodic destruction of the cosmos and recreation of the same. On the other hand, in religions such as Judaism and Christianity, the cyclical concept of time was unacceptable and time was irreversible. God made the world sacred and so the entire history is sacred. The culmination of this time would be the Last Judgment, where the world and its time would come to an end.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.s.

1) What is the role of a priest in religious activities?

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2) How do sacred time and sacred space contribute to the understanding of religions?

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3.4 RITUALS

Terms and concepts

One of the religious forms or structures that expresses the extrinsic character of religions is sacraments or sacred ceremonies or rituals. A few minor distinctions would be of help at this juncture before proceeding further. Sacraments are church ceremonies or rituals, and is commonly used in Christianity. Such ceremonies are well-planned, officially approved and animated by trained and ordained ministers. The lesser rituals and practices (like blessing ourselves with holy water or praying the rosary) are called sacramentals. The Latin word *sacramentum* means "a sign of the sacred". Rituals are also sacred ceremonies which invoke and evoke energies to empower life. These are similar to sacraments, however, any sacred ceremony can be called a ritual and some rituals can even be performed by ordinary believers.

A rite is an established, ceremonious, usually religious act or process. Rites fall into three major categories: a) Rites of passage, which changes or acts as a transition of one's social status, such as baptism, marriage, death, etc. b) Rites of worship, that involves a community to gather together for worship, such as a Christian Mass, and c) Rites of personal devotion, which is purely an individual effort, such as prayer, pilgrimages, etc.

Two other words that need a clarification are Signs and symbols. Although there are close similarities between sign and symbol and are often used interchangeably, yet there are differences and dissimilarities. According to Susanne Langer a sign "is something to act upon, or a means to command action; the symbol is an instrument of thought." An ordinary sign-function contains subject, sign, and object, while a symbol contains an additional element, namely, conception. A sign points to something else, but a symbol denotes something. It also connotes something. A symbol leads to a conception which then leads to a certain level of abstraction. "A concept is all that a symbol really conveys." Signs are pointers, but symbols are "vehicles for the conception of objects." Paul Ricoeur brings out deeper differences explaining that there is a 'double intentionality' found in symbols (which is not found in signs). The primary intention is literal. The symbol acts like a sign. Every symbol is a sign. The second intention is that it points to a certain situation that is ennobling, something that is different from the usual. In other words, symbols are signs and yet they point to something beyond and stands for this something. In other words, "symbol is the movement of the primary meaning that makes us share in the latent meaning and thus assimilates us to the symbolized without our being able to intellectually dominate the similarity." Signs are indicative, while symbols are more revealing. Ricoeur further points out that signs are more transparent since they are literal and obvious. Symbols are however opaque since they conceal the meaning and is not divulged unless dealt deep into it.

Rituals involve the use of symbols and symbolic actions. Practical actions are those that are performed for specific practical purposes, like cooking, or drying clothes. Symbolic actions are performed to symbolize a deeper meaning, like a priest lighting a fire or washing his hands etc. Rituals sometimes combine symbolic actions with practical actions, thereby bringing greater significance and deeper meaning to the practical things that we do, for instance, saying prayers before a meal. The difference between a ritual and a routine is very similar to the difference between a sign and a symbol. While rituals have deeper and multi-level meanings, routines are

one-dimensional. For instance, brushing your teeth, eating etc are routines and not rituals. Sometimes rituals can come to be experienced as lifeless routines when repeated continually without any sense of their deeper significance. Rituals are often celebrative in nature. They enable us to break the monotony of daily routines. They enable us to pursue various deeper aspects of life that might otherwise be neglected.

Characteristics of Rituals

Some of the characteristics of rituals described here will enable us to understand how they operate and their impact on the believers. Rituals involve movements and gestures that convey meaning beyond what they express at the literal level. They are symbolic actions that are repeated regularly. Often they take on the tone of celebration - helping us to break out of life's routines. Rituals are usually connected to important events. They are often associated with the many new beginnings in people's lives. Rituals Words sometimes play a secondary role supportive and complementary to the actions. They link people with their past, contribute to the well being of the present, and gently lead them into the future. A good ritual is how we remember who we are and how we celebrated who we shall become. In rituals people come together to celebrate being a community with a common identity. Rituals become alive and meaningful not by simple observance, but by wholehearted participation.

Elements of Rituals

Many rituals contain or concern one or all of these seven elements.

Ceremony

An introductory ceremony, either grand or simple, and a concluding ceremony is part of the ritual performed. In some occasions, the actual ritual may be serious and simple, but the accompanying ceremony may be filled with pageantry and paraphernalia, depending on the circumstance.

Religious devotion

Humans as homo religiosus, find their expressions revealed through religious devotion. This entails verbal prayer, bodily expressions of praise, supplication, surrender etc. The expressions of faith is an individual effort, although often performed in a collective forum. The believer prays with his/her entire being with gestures, dances, songs, rhythms and all this is done to invoke, appease, seek, thank, etc. Religious devotion is also expressed non-verbally through a grand silence which contains reverence and awe in the presence of the holy.

Sacrifice

Sacrifices of food, animals, or goods is another element of rituals which act as a substitute to the one who offers. Some rituals have sacrifices as an extension of gratitude, while some others (especially tantric rituals) consider sacrifices as obligations in order to appease the divine.

Arts

Many rituals have either music or visual arts, or dance, or all the three as important components of the performance of the sacred ceremony. The use of arts could be seen primarily as keeping the attention of the believers intact and involving them, thus enriching the ritual performances. The use of arts in rituals aid the believers and the performers to enter into a state of

transcendental relationship. Music and dance de-stress and relieve the participants and help them to enter deeply and participate wholeheartedly into the ritual.

Life cycle

Rituals deal closely with human growth. Each ritual or sacrament seeks to confirm a new stage of growth such as birth, coming of age, marriage, etc. , or act as progressive factors in that growth. In rituals, the life cycle of the divine is also reflected and their help is sought to assist human growth.

Relationship

A significant aspect of rituals is relationships - between people, animals, the natural world, the divine, etc. It seeks to purify, strengthen, reintegrate, beautify and beatify all relationships. Especially, relationships with the divine is sought to be 'set right' in rituals. Divine intervention in human relationships, knowing and understanding the divine ways so that relationships on earth do not suffer are often the motifs found in many rituals.

Petition

The phenomenon of asking for graces and favours and blessings upon humanity is part of every ritual. As mentioned above, to help survive and flourish on this earth, with no discomforts is at the core of every ritual and this is expressed through petitions.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.s.

1) What are the various elements in rituals?

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2) What are some of the important terms and concepts used in the understanding of 'rituals'?

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Worship and Liturgy

Terms and Importance

Any system or set of rituals that is prescribed for public or corporate performance is liturgy. There are two aspects that need to be addressed in any liturgy: the corporate character of liturgy and the articulation of this corporate character as a set of ritual performances. Liturgical practices differ from religion to religion. In countries like India and China, household rituals are more common and even among the Muslims, the role of public liturgy is minimum, although they come together to pray every Friday.

The term liturgy has its origin in the Greek noun *leitourgia* that refers to an act or work (*ergon*) performed by or for the people (*laïtos*). In Greek city states, this word was used in a technical and political sense. It referred to the social obligation that the rich and the wealthy citizens had towards the society. They had to undertake common tasks such as building a monument, outfitting a ship, helping to supply an army etc. It was also used to refer to any service rendered by one to another. Later this general meaning acquired a new technical meaning within the cultic sphere of a service performed for a deity, especially among the mystery cults of Eleusis, Isis, and so on. Christianity borrowed this term and referred it to the Eucharist. Then this term was not used much till the 19th century- when liturgical reform movements began springing up. The Catholics emphasized the importance of increasing lay participation in the ritual activity of the church, and the Protestants, through the reforms sought to amplify and diversify the ritual expression of congregational life. Within this context, liturgy suggests the articulation of a ritual structure or calendar.

Elements in worship and liturgy

There are various elements involved in worship and liturgy. A few of them are mentioned below:

Involvement and integration:

In any act of worship, the involvement of the body, mind, and the spirit is important. The merit of a liturgy lies in such an involvement, along with that of the corporate body. The performers of the ritual often become mediators and animators of the worship, bringing together the corporate body. Involved deeply into the liturgy, the participants hope to experience an integration of the sacred and the secular, the divine and the human, etc. Integration into the religious corporate body is one important task of liturgy.

Articulation and Expression:

Liturgy creates the space for articulation and expression of one's innate desires, visions and expectations through rituals. No liturgy is complete without articulation of the individual and the corporate body's needs and desires. When a space for articulation of one's own personal needs is blocked or unheeded to within the space of liturgy, such a liturgy would soon find itself redundant and archaic. For liturgy to be relevant, articulation and expressions are important.

Memory and Re-enactment:

Through diverse celebrations, feasts and festivals spread throughout the calendar, liturgical events re-enact the foundational experiences of the believing community and bring it live to the worshipping community. Tracing back the memory is also important to the believers as it sustains their faith and increases their hope. To go back into history and considering it as sacred history re-energises and brings a fresh meaning into the present moment.

Interpretations and Understanding:

One of the purposes of liturgy is also to impart understanding, knowledge and wisdom of the theological interpretations of God, humanity and the entire world. Sacred books, myths with their events and figures etc. are interpreted to the present contexts, in order to understand the way of the future.

Such an understanding is not done in isolation, but in relation to the cycle of time. Each event is understood better and related closely to the previous event. Thus, all liturgies are integrated into the other. The cyclic calendar of liturgies are also interpreted in such a way only.

Functions of liturgy

There can be at least four functions of liturgy. They are a) temporalization, b) socialization, c) coordination, d) liturgical paradigms.

Temporalization:

Temporalization is to order or structure time. One of the chief functions of liturgy is to provide a periodization that is necessary for the experience of time. This led to astronomical observations and the development of calendars. Christianity has a three year cycle, Judaism has a fifty year cycle, Hinduism has seven ages etc. are examples of temporalization. This structured time is made available for a conscious experience and intellectual comprehension through liturgy.

Socialization:

Another chief function of liturgy is to instil a corporate identity. The need to belong is a human need and religious liturgy addresses this by inviting its members to participate. Liturgy focuses on a collective identity and presents it to the believing mind that it can be consciously appropriated.

Coordination:

Yet another function of liturgy is to coordinate various dimensions of experience that includes the emotive, social, domestic, political, natural, and the spiritual. An interplay of various kinds of languages- silent, verbal, non-verbal etc help in this process. The emotive aspects of experience include sexuality, relationships, etc, the social aspects are of that of identity, conformity, community, etc, the domestic aspects concern the day to day living, in contrast to the spiritual which is vision-based, celestial and eschatological, etc., the natural aspects are that of relationship with nature, agriculture, animals, seasons etc, and the political aspects include the public face of the community, its moral authority and its influential capacities. Liturgy coordinates all these factors from a traditionalistic and futuristic perspective and affects the internal fabric of each believer.

Liturgical paradigms:

Liturgy serves as a model or paradigm for life outside it. It aims to serve as a model for the secular life or the life within religion. It serves as common models of what appropriate or significant action is like. While being didactic also, the primary aim of liturgy would be inspire the believers to follow the paradigm it offers. Hence, it attracts the participants, not through fear, but through an appeal to the heart to carry forward the liturgy to secular life.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.s.

1) Is Liturgy an important aspect of religious structure?

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2) What are the various functions of liturgy?
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3.5 LET US SUM UP

Religious structures thus attempt to make an indelible impact in the various dimensions of life of the believer and the believing community. Through its diverse organizational aspects, religions try to strengthen themselves, their followers and exercise influence to the very internal fabric of each follower. The quality of each religion is often revealed through the formation of its structures. When loose-ended and less-controlled, religions tend to grow, but with limited social influence. But when strictly structured and ordered, religions tend to become autocratic, orthodox and even suffocating. A healthy balance of both these aspects are necessary for any religion to keep growing. This unit was an exposition of a few forms of Religious structures. This, we hope, would enable critical minds to probe deeper into religions so that clarity and enlightened understanding of religions may arise.

3.6 KEY WORDS

Priesthood: a structure in religions which creates leaders or animators or officials to perform religious rites, rituals and ceremonies, administer sacraments or rituals, or/and lead people spiritually.

The Sacred: Opposite of secular or profane. The word sacrum means what belongs to the gods or was in their power Set apart by a boundary for gods, the divine etc.

Rituals: sacred ceremonies which invoke and evoke energies to empower life. These are similar to sacraments, however, any sacred ceremony can be called a ritual and some rituals can even be performed by ordinary believers, while sacraments are performed by religious officials.

Liturgy: Any system or set of rituals that is prescribed for public or corporate performance is liturgy

3.7 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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UNIT 4 RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

Contents

- 4.0 Objects
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Religious Tolerance in Western World
- 4.3 Western Philosophers on Religious Tolerance
- 4.4 Religious Tolerance in Islam
- 4.5 Religious Tolerance in India
- 4.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.7 Further Readings and References

4.0 OBJECTIVES

The unit surveys the historical events and moments highlighting the religious tolerance. The unit gives details of both these accounts in both the West and in the Indian situations.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In a discourse on philosophy of religion, the historical factors that are presented in the present unit would not be out of track. It would be a useful tool as a background and foundational data for making a speculative and idealistic discourse on religious tolerance. The unit gives a concrete instances and efforts taken by various personalities, traditions and governments where religious tolerance was necessitated and practiced in reality. It gives the philosophers a concrete practice of a theory or discourse on religious tolerance.

4.2 RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN WESTERN WORLD

The practice of deliberately allowing on permitting a thing of which one disapproves also been defined as “to bear on endure” or “to nourish, sustain or preserve”. Toleration may signify “no more than by the adherent of a dominant religion for other religious to exist even through the latter are looked on with disapproval as inferiors, mistaken or harmful.” (Perez Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration came to the West*. Princeton University Press 2003, pp. 5-6 quoting D.D. Raphool et al.) Historically, most incidents and writing pertain to toleration involve the conflict between a dominant or state religion and minority or dissenting viewpoints. In the 20th and present century analyses of the doctrine of toleration have been expanded to include political and ethnic grips and other minorities.

It is recorded in the Old Testament the Persian king Cyrus the great believed to have released the Jews from captivity in 539-530 B.C., and allowed their return to their land (Book of Ezra, King James Bible). The book of exodus levities and Deuteronomy in the Old Treatment, refer to toleration of strangers. The texts are frequently used in sermons to place for compassion and tolerance of those who are different from us and less powerful. In 331 BC Alexandria, the Hellenistic city witnessed peaceful co existence of a large *janish* community along with a large Greek and Egyptian population indicating practice of multi-culturalism. The Roman Empire

encouraged conquered communities to continue worshipping their gods. Roman Empire promoted the propagation of the gods of conquered territories to enjoy the benefits of worship within the empire. However, early Christians were persecuted as they rejected the Roman pantheism and refused to honour the emperor as a god. Roman emperor, Galerius issued an edict of toleration of Christianity in 311 AD and edicts of Licinius and Constantine (who converted to Christianity in 312 AD) later became a solace for Christians.

Late Medieval period and the Renaissance Age

Latin concept toleration was a highly developed political and judicial concept in medieval ideology and common law, self-restraint in civil power in the face of outsiders like infidels, Muslims or Jews, also social groups like protestants and lepers. Under protestant reformation discussion came up to permit dissenting religious thought toleration as a Govt. sanctioned practice is not evident till the 16th century. In 1348, it was publically pleaded with Catholics not to murder Jews, whom they blamed for the Black Death. He explained that Jews also died by plague like and Black Death flourished in areas where there were no Jews. Yet, these calls failed. Johann Reuchlin (1466-1522) a German humanist and a Scholar of Greek and Hebrew is known for his opposition against forcible conversion of Jews to the Catholic religion. Despite occasional episodes of killings and persecution, especially during the Black Death, Poland was relatively tolerant for the Jews in the medieval period. The statute of Kalisz guaranteed safety, personal liberties, freedom of religion, trade and travel were for Jews. Pomilus Vladimiri (c. 1370-1435) a Polish scholar and rector at the council of Constantine in 1414 publicized a famous document. He argued that pagan and Christian nations could co exist in peace and criticized wages of Conquest. Julia Kristina elucidated a philosophy of political and religious toleration based on our mutual identities as strangers. Roger William, a Baptist Theodosius and founder of Rhode Island supported state-toleration of all the heretics in the world against civil persecution. Instead it was God's duty to judge in the end, not man's. Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536), was a Dutch Renaissance humanist and Catholic whose works laid a foundation for religious toleration. For example, in *De libero arbitrio*, opposing certain views of Martin Luther, Erasmus noted that religious disputants should be temperate in their language. Thomas More (1478–1535), Catholic Lord Chancellor of King Henry VIII and author, described a world of almost complete religious toleration in *Utopia* (1516), in which the Utopians can hold various religious beliefs without persecution from the authorities.

Sebastian Castellio (1515–1563) was a French Protestant theologian who in 1554 published under a pseudonym the pamphlet *Whether heretics should be persecuted (De haereticis, an sint persequendi)* criticizing John Calvin's execution of Michael Servetus: "When Servetus fought with reasons and writings, he should have been repulsed by reasons and writings." Castellio concluded: "We can live together peacefully only when we control our intolerance. Even though there will always be differences of opinion from time to time, we can at any rate come to general understandings, can love one another, and can enter the bonds of peace, pending the day when we shall attain unity of faith."

Jean Bodin (1530–1596) was a French Catholic jurist and political philosopher. His Latin work *Colloquium heptaplatomeres de rerum sublimium arcanis abditis* ("The Colloquium of the Seven") portrays a conversation about the nature of truth between seven cultivated men from diverse religious or philosophical backgrounds: a natural philosopher, a Calvinist, a Muslim, a Roman Catholic, a Lutheran, a Jew, and a skeptic. All agree to live in mutual respect and tolerance. In 1571, Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II granted religious toleration to the nobles of Lower Austria, their families and workers.

The Warsaw Confederation

Poland has a long tradition of religious freedom. The right to worship freely was a basic right given to all inhabitants of the Commonwealth throughout the 15th and early 16th century, however, complete freedom of religion was officially recognized in Poland in 1573 during the Warsaw Confederation. Poland kept religious freedom laws during an era when religious persecution was an everyday occurrence in the rest of Europe. The Warsaw confederation was a private compact signed by representatives of all the major religions in Polish and Lithuanian society, in which they pledged each other mutual support and tolerance.

Edict of Nantes

The Edict of Nantes, issued on April 13, 1598, by Henry IV of France, granted the Protestants of France (also known as Huguenots) substantial rights in a nation still considered essentially Catholic. The main concern was civil unity; the Edict separated civil from religious unity, treated some Protestants for the first time as more than mere schismatics and heretics, and opened a path for secularism and tolerance. In offering general freedom of conscience to individuals, the edict offered many specific concessions to the Protestants, such as amnesty and the reinstatement of their civil rights, including the right to work in any field or for the State and to bring grievances directly to the king. It marked the end of the religious wars France during the second half of the 16th century.

The era of Enlightenment beginning in the 1600s, politicians and commentators began formulating theories of religious toleration and basing legal codes on the concept. A distinction began to develop between civil tolerance, concerned with "the policy of the state towards religious dissent" (John Coffey, *Persecution and Toleration in Protestant England, 1558–1689*. Longman Publishing Group 2000)., and ecclesiastical tolerance, concerned with the degree of diversity tolerated within a particular church. John Milton (1608–1674), English Protestant poet and essayist, argued for free according to conscience and above all liberties (applied however, only to the conflicting Protestant sects, and not to atheists, Jews, Moslems or even Catholics). In 1609, Rudolph II decreed religious toleration in Bohemia.

In the American colonies:

In 1636, Roger Williams and companions at the foundation of Rhode Island entered into a compact binding themselves "to be obedient to the majority only in civil things". Lucian Johnston writes, "Williams' intention was to grant an infinitely greater religious liberty than then existed anywhere in the world outside of the Colony of Maryland". In 1663, Charles II granted the colony a charter guaranteeing complete religious toleration (Johnston, Lucian, *Religious Liberty in Maryland and Rhode Island* (Brooklyn: International Catholic Truth Society, 1903), p. 30, 38). In 1649 Maryland passed the Maryland Toleration Act, also known as the Act Concerning Religion, a law mandating religious tolerance for Trinitarian Christians only (excluding Non-Trinitarian faiths). Passed on September 21, 1649 by the assembly of the Maryland colony, it was the first law requiring religious tolerance in the British North American colonies. The Calvert family sought enactment of the law to protect Catholic settlers and some of the other religions that did not conform to the dominant Anglicanism of Britain and her colonies. In 1657, New Amsterdam granted religious toleration to Jews (Hasia R. Diner, *The Jews of the United States, 1654 to 2000*, 2004, University of California Press, pp. 13–15).

4.3 WESTERN PHILOSOPHERS ON RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

Spinoza

Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677) was a Dutch Jewish philosopher. He published the Theological-Political Treatise anonymously in 1670, arguing (according to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy) that "the freedom to philosophize can not only be granted without injury to piety and the peace of the Commonwealth, but that the peace of the Commonwealth and Piety are endangered by the suppression of this freedom". English philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) published A Letter Concerning Toleration in 1689. Locke's work appeared amidst a fear that Catholicism might be taking over England, and responds to the problem of religion and government by proposing religious toleration as the answer. Unlike Thomas Hobbes, who saw uniformity of religion as the key to a well-functioning civil society, Locke argued that more religious groups actually prevent civil unrest. In his opinion, civil unrest results from confrontations caused by any magistrate's attempt to prevent different religions from being practiced, rather than tolerating their proliferation. John Stuart Mill's arguments in "On Liberty" (1859) in support of the freedom of speech were phrased to include a defense of religious toleration.

Act of Toleration

The Act of Toleration, adopted by the British Parliament in 1689, allowed freedom of worship to Nonconformists who had pledged to the oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy and rejected transubstantiation. The Nonconformists were Protestants who dissented from the Church of England such as Baptists and Congregationalists. They were allowed their own places of worship and their own teachers, if they accepted certain oaths of allegiance. François-Marie Arouet, the French writer, historian and philosopher known as Voltaire (1694–1778) published his "Treatise on Toleration" in 1763. In it he attacked religious superstition, but also said, "It does not require great art, or magnificently trained eloquence, to prove that Christians should tolerate each other."

Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789), adopted by the National Constituent Assembly during the French Revolution, states in Article 10: "No-one shall be interfered with for his opinions, even religious ones, provided that their practice doesn't disturb public order as established by the law."

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution, ratified along with the rest of the Bill of Rights on December 15, 1791, included the following words: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." In 1802, Thomas Jefferson wrote a letter to the Danbury Baptists Association in which he said: "...I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,' thus building a wall of separation between Church and State (Jefferson's Letter to the Danbury Baptists (June 1798) – Library of Congress Information Bulletin. Loc.gov. Retrieved on 2011-06-15). In the nineteenth century the process of legislating religious toleration went forward, while philosophers continued to discuss the underlying rationale."

Catholic Relief Act

The Catholic Relief Act adopted by the Parliament in 1829 repealed the last of the criminal laws aimed at Catholic citizens of Great Britain.

UN Declaration

In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or

in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.” Even though not formally legally binding, the Declaration has been adopted in or influenced many national constitutions since 1948. It also serves as the foundation for a growing number of international treaties and national laws and international, regional, national and sub-national institutions protecting and promoting human rights including the freedom of religion.

In 1965, The Roman Catholic Church Vatican II Council issued the decree *Dignitatis Humane* (Religious Freedom) that states that all people must have the right to religious freedom("*Dignitatis Humane*", Decree on Religious Freedom, 1965, retrieved 1 June 2007) In 1986, the first World Day of Prayer for Peace was held in Assisi. Representatives of one hundred and twenty different religions came together for prayer to their God or gods ("Address of Johan Paulii to the representatives of the Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities and of the World Reglions" (1986) retrieved 1 June 2007). In 1988, in the spirit of Glasnost, Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev promised increased religious toleration.

4.4 RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN ISLAM

Other major world religions also have texts or practices supporting the idea of religious toleration. Circa 622, [Muhammed](#) established the [Constitution of Medina](#), which incorporated religious freedom for Christians and Jews. Certain verses of the [Qu'ran](#) were interpreted to create a specially tolerated status for [People of the Book](#), Jewish and Christian believers in the Old and New Testaments considered to have been a basis for Islamic religion: “Verily. Those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and Sabians, whoever believes in God and the Last Day and do righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.”

Under [Islamic law](#), Jews and Christians were considered [dhimmis](#), a legal status inferior to that of a Muslim but superior to that of other non-Muslims. Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire held a protected status and continued to practice their own religion, as did Christians. Yitzhak Sarfati, born in Germany, became the Chief Rabbi of [Edirne](#) and wrote a letter inviting European Jews to settle in the Ottoman Empire. Michael Walzer observes that the established religion of the [Ottoman] empire was Islam, but three other religious communities—Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, and Jewish—were permitted to form autonomous organizations. These three were equal among themselves, without regard to their relative numerical strength. They were subject to the same restrictions vis -a-vis Muslims—with regard to dress, proselytizing, and intermarriage, for example—and were allowed the same legal control over their own members. The Supreme Court of India has ruled that [Sharia](#) or Muslim law, holds precedence for Muslims over Indian civil law(*The Hatreds of India; Hindu Memory Scarred by Centuries Of Sometimes Despotic Islamic Rule*. New York Times, Published: December 11, 1992). (*Jefferson's Letter to the Danbury Baptists* (June 1998) – Library of Congress Information Bulletin. Loc.gov. Retrieved on 2011-06-15).

4.5 RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN INDIA

Early Period

India has largely been a land of religious tolerance. It has tradition of non-violence and peaceful co-existence. The Aryans who came from central area, established their culture and superiority over northern India between 1500 B.C and 500 B.C. The Aryans imposed Vedic religion but also incorporated element of indigenous religions, of the post-Harappa society that survived the downfall of the Indus Valley civilization. If the cults of Agni, Varun, Mitra, Nasatya characterized the early Vedic religions, *Atharva* Veda, the fourth and final book in the series of four sacred Vedas reveals non-Vedic religious elements like amulets, charms and importantly, the cult of Rudra (late on the cult of Shiva) Amulets, Charms and Cult of Rudra were borrowed from the Harappa civilization. The famous Pashupati seal depicting the lord of animals – a male yogi surrounded by four animals – deer, elephant, rhinoceros and tiger is representative of a male god popularly came to be known as Shiva or Rudra (the male form of Shiva) in the Indian civilization. Hence, the Indigenous religions expressed religious tolerance by magnanimously the Vedic Society. Although scholars interested in upholding Vedic religion try to say that it was Vedic society that expressed religious tolerance. Realistically speaking, it was the great gesture of indigenous religious community to accept with open mind and heart the invading Aryan religion and culture.

Rise of Heterodox socio-religious sects

Vedic society began to be hierarchical and becoming vividly discriminatory by Varna system. Challenge to social inequalities of Varna-based Vedic society and complexities of ritual-based Vedic religions came from the philosophers and thinkers of the 6th century B.C. The most world famous thinkers who rose to the occasion to preach newly reformed religions based on religious-tolerance were Mahatma Buddha, Mahavira and Mahakshi Gosalaputra who introduced Buddhism, Jainism and the Ajivika-sects respectively. Buddha and Mahavira Jainas taught, preached and practiced religious-tolerance and non-violence significantly. In his philosophy of eight fold path, Buddha emphasized upon 'Middle path' to highlight peaceful co-existence among different sects. Mahavira Jainas practiced severe austerity but also believed in a philosophy of religious tolerance. Early Christianity in India also witnessed a similar Phenomenon when it centered around the popular and venerated saint, St. Thomas and his traditions.

Puranic Hindu Religion and Emergence of *Teerthas* (Pilgrimage centres)

Counter revolution by Brahmanical religion led to five sects of the Puranic Hindu religion the sect of Vaishnavism, Ganesha and Surya. The process of absorption to tribal rural and folk cults into the Puranic religion continued throughout early and medieval centuries in the subcontinent of India. At the popular level, different communities participated in each others' religious festivities. It is important that many religious sects of medieval India came out of popular Hinduism and Islam

Islam in India and Sufism

Early Islam in India was characterized by the rise and popularity of its liberal school and Baba Farid, early sufi saints like Ganj Shakar in Punjab, Muinuddin Chisti in Ajmer, Nizamuddin Auliya, and Nasiruddin Chiragh-i Dilli Dehli. These popular saints set high standard of life-style by following simplicity and austerity. They preached the language of peace, harmony and love reducing the conflicts between the Hindus and Muslims. Sufi saints made visits to sacred shrines popular which attracted women into the folds of Sufi sects.

The close interactions between Hindus and Muslims in Rajasthan is clearly evident from the popularity of the title of *Hamud* among the Rajput dynasties of medieval Rajasthan. Brahmanas patronized by the Sultans or Brahmanas families with contemporary sultans devised

a new Sanskrit term, *Suratrana*. *Suratranas* are praised in Sanskrit inscriptions composed by the Brahmanas in medieval Northern and Western India. This evidence is indicative of close client-patron relationship between indigenous agents of legitimacies of Brahmanas and emerging sultans.

Bhakti Movement

Bhakti movement coincided with Sufi movement in northern India. Bhakti movement appeared earlier in South India, than in the north. Bhakti movement in southern and northern India accomplished similar goals by removing dominance of priestly class, reducing religious and sectarian conflicts, introducing personal devotees (*Bhakti*) as means of direct communion between God and lay devotees. Medieval Bhakti saints like Mirabai, Ravidas, Kabir, Dadudyal, Jambhoji, Ekantha, Tukaram, Nrisimha Mehta, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu epitomized the message of love and religious tolerance.

Romila Thapar in her recent work quotes an inscription from the Somanath Temple of Gujarat where temple-priests gave away land to an influential Muslim Arab trader for the building of a mosque next to the temple. It shows that there was no religious animosity between the Hindus and Muslims at the popular level. Hindus and Muslims worshipped some of the popular socio-religious reforms alike popular Gurus like Kabir, Mirabai and Jambhoji in Northern India attracted both the Hindus and Muslims just like the medieval Sufi saints.

The Mughal emperor, Akbar contributed to religious tolerance largely. Just like Ashok, Akbar was aware of inter-sectarian tension and the need to address it in view of the recent establishment of the Mughal Empire which was of central Asian origin. Akbar made it an official policy to enter into matrimonial alliances with the Hindu Rajput dynasties of Rajasthan. Both Emperor Akbar and his son, Emperor Jahangir had Hindu Rajput wives who were accorded full religious freedom of worship and practice within the Mughal royal palace. Akbar also recruited a considerable number of Hindu Rajput courtiers, officials and military commanders in the Mughal-service. The most striking achievement to contain religious harmony was Akbar's policy of *Suleh-Kul* or universal peace and invited religious leaders and priests from Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism and Jainism among others at Ibadal-Khama, Fatehpur Sikri. Priests from all these classical religions discussed and debated meritorious points of their individual religions. However, this conference was inconclusive. But Akbar, dismayed at priestly points of difference.

Prince Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, known for his liberal and intellectual disposition, got translated the Sanskrit work Upanishad into Persian, setting an example of religious tolerance in India. Later India witnessed a new chapter with the 'Divide and Rule' policy of the British colonial regime. The British administration introduced communal regiments/contingents in the Indian Army on the basis of religious denomination: Hindu, Sikh, Muslim following the *sepoy* mutiny or the first war of independence of 1857. This development disturbed communal harmony and encouraged sectarian identities. Sectarian movements heightened tensions between the Hindu, Muslims and Sikhs. National Congress party in the twentieth century Indian freedom movement led by Gandhi in the early century fought against rising communal tensions fuelled by the British policy and encouragement to Muslim league and idea of the birth of Pakistan. Communal riots following the partition of the sub-continent of India into two nations are the worst memories of 1947. The constitution of independent India adopted the concept of 'secularism' in preamble to give constitutional legitimacy to religious tolerance in India.

4.6 LET US SUM UP

The unit gave a background description from the historical point of view the existence of religious tolerance from both Western and Indian contexts. However, the unit should have developed philosophical analysis and view point of religious tolerance. Still the historical background gives a foundation for such discussion and discourse. The students of philosophy taking the contextual facts as a basis for reflection of why and how of religious tolerance.

4.7 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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