CHAPTER-III

FAITH AND LANGUAGE
The problem of religious language is one of the central issues in philosophy of religion. The truth of religious language is not a strict, literal truth. When we speak about God, we use words taken from the context of ordinary language which apply to finite things and persons. In the statement 'God is our Father' the word 'father' is not used in the ordinary normal sense but we are using the word in a special sense. The language that we use about God presents similar difficulties. When we talk about God loving, speaking or doing this and that, we are using a language in a special sense. What do we really mean when we use language in this way? And how can it be justified? Do those statements that have the form of factual assertions refer to a special kind of fact - religious as distinguished from scientific fact or do they fulfil a different function altogether? The term 'God' is neither used univocally nor equivocally but analogically. Analogical predication is made on the basis of similarity between the analogates. When we say 'man is good' and 'God is good', the goodness of man is known in terms of the qualities of love, benevolence etc. But the goodness of God is known analogically i.e. the qualities attributed to God in infinite degree and magnitude. Mascall observes:

In its theological application where the analogates concerned are God and a
creature, the relation which the analogy is based will be that of creative causality.¹

The attributes which are predicated of man in a normal sense are true of God in a derivative or qualified sense of the terms. In the analogy of proportionality the analogates are used in the literal sense. But the attributes are predicated proportionately in the nature of the analogates. In theological context, the attributes of God are said to belong to him in a way proportionate to his nature, as they are true of man in proportion to their finite nature. Hawkin observes:

Thus the divine goodness is to God and human goodness is to man and the divine wisdom to God as human wisdom to man and in general the divine attribute is to God as analogues finite qualities are the finite things.²

According to R.M. Hare religious statements have their distinctive logic, religious statements are bliks. A blik expresses a fundamental attitude. It does not have the logical function of an assertion or even a system of assertions. An assertion needs to have an incompatibility to another but a blik need not have to the either compatible or incompatible to another blik. So 'God loves' or 'God exists' are only bliks and not assertions. These are "unverifiable and unfalsifiable pieces of faith". Bliks as basic categories, are the ultimate concern that give intelligibility to religio-theological framework.

Religious language, according to Tillich is symbolical. According to Tillich religious language is the language of symbol and concern. Tillich mentions that a symbol points to something beyond itself. A symbol participates in the power of the symbolised. A symbol opens up new dimensions of reality and paripassu there is an increased sensitivity and receptivity in the user of the symbol. A symbol is born, grows and dies. The truth of symbolic statement should not be confused with the truth of scientific or descriptive statements. Tillich claims that religious knowledge is "verifiable and communicable

knowledge*. 4 John Hick observes; Tillich's conception of the symbolic character of religious language can like many of his central ideas be developed in either of the two opposite directions, and is presented by Tillich in the body of his writing as a whole in such ways as to preserve its ambiguity and flexibility.5

Ian T. Ramsey has suggested that one of the ways in which language function is like a working model. A model is a representation of something which enables us to grasp the thing that it stands for. In the context of religious language a model is;

A situation with which we are all familiar, and which can be used for reaching another situation with which we are not so familiar; one which without the model we should not recognise so easily.6

Such models are accompanied by qualifiers. A qualifier prescribes a special way of developing these model situations. For example, when we say that God is infinitely wise, the word 'wise' names the model-situation. The qualifier 'infinitely' points the way in which it is to be understood. We have some idea of what wisdom means but the qualifier 'infinitely' does not merely indicate that God's wisdom is a scaled-up version of man's wisdom. We cannot conceive precisely what is involved in the statement that "God is infinitely wise". In such case we cannot see God as he is in himself. But the model puts us on to a clue towards understanding its meaning, and the qualifier reminds us that we are not to take the clue in a strictly literal way.

Philosophers like Mascall, Feffe, Tillich, Dillistone have drawn attention to the symbolic character of language. Words, statements and the mental images that they conjure up are like symbols which stand for something else and through which the mind encounters that thing, event or person. Basically, symbols have two aspects; there is the symbol, the sign and that to which it points. To treat the symbol on its own, apart from what it stands for, is to miss the whole point. Genuine symbols are not mere images. They present a medium through which we may participate in the reality that they represent. It is impossible to
describe the religious experience in direct literal terms. Nor is the symbol to be used to the exclusion of others. It needs to be complemented by other concepts of that particular religious framework but each in its own way. These symbols shed light and meaning upon the experience of those who seek to know their meaning. Through them the mind grasps an element of reality which is otherwise inaccessible.

It is important to note the religious language is replete with paradoxes and contradictions. D.M. Ballic observes;

The reason why the element of paradox comes in to all religious thought and statement is because God cannot be comprehended in any human words or in any other categories of our finite thought. God can be known only in a direct personal relationship, on I and He addresses us and we respond Him. 7

God is beyond conceptualisation. Whenever there is an attempt to conceptualise, contradiction is inevitable. The contradictions and paradoxes belong to the category of

nonsense. But the contradictions found in religious discourse are different from the formal contradictions of Logic which convey nothing. In theological discourse these paradoxes are significant in so far as they are indicative of the nature of reality. They show the inadequacy of categorial mode of expression. What is more interesting is that the paradoxes disappear when they are traced back to their source i.e. encounter-experience. Needless to say that a person who has had the religious experience is the one who is faithful and is the one who can make out the significance of terms when they are analogically predicated upon God. Underlying the importance of experience is also to indicate that to use and understand a theological statement is to embrace a mode of life which is characteristically religious. The encounter-experience is of the nature of I-Thou interaction.

J.H. Randall gives a functional analysis of the religious language. Unlike other symbols which have an objective co-relate, the religious symbols belong to the category of artistic symbols. They are non-representative and therefore non-cognitive. They are to be understood not in terms of what they represent but in terms of what they do. The religious symbols are said to have four-fold functions viz. to instil the emotions of the individual so that one is led to lead a life of commitment, to promote
social harmony, to communicate those dimensions of experience which are not communicable through non-symbolic forms and to lend intelligibility to those facets of experience which belong to the other of the divine. Randall says:

They teach us how to see what man's life in the world is, and what it might be. They teach us how to discuss what human nature can make out of its natural conditions and materials. They make us receptive to qualities of the world encountered, and they open our hearts to the new qualities with which that world, in cooperation with spirit of man, can clothe itself. They enable us to see and feel the religious dimension of our world better, the "order of splendour" and of man's experience in and with it. They teach us how to find the Divine, they show us visions of God.8

According to MacIntyre self-commitment constitutes the essence of religious language, but the commitment does not

pertain to the whole life but only the fragmentary aspect of one's life. The justification offered in favour of theological utterances lack the logical rigour and therefore they are devoid of cognitive content. But religious utterances are significant in so far as they are expressions of the commitment on the part of the believer:

The religious believer commits himself in his use of myth to the view that those stories are in some way or other stories about a real being, God, acting in the world that we are acquainted with in ordinary experience.9

A given article of faith is justified in terms of the religious framework of which it is an integral part. Religious belief is self-authentic and each religion has its own logic. Zurdeeg interprets religious language as a convictional language. It has a logic of its own. Religious language is neither indicative nor definitional. An indicative expression describes a limited part of the reality whereas the convictional language describes the reality as a whole. He distinguishes between religious language and moral language as both of them are

convictional. The moral language has a limited significance as it seeks to unfold the nature of human action but religious language imparts meaning to all existents what so ever. In religious language the content of speech owes its significance to the speaker. That is why, they are self-authentic. The meaning of religious utterance is not only to be traced to the conviction of the speaker but it also plays a vital role in generating conviction in the hearer. Unlike other forms of language it is self-verifying and carries with it its own attitude. He says; "there are neither scientific nor philosophic proofs which validate or invalidate any conviction". ¹⁰ In convictional language, the speaker lives through his expression and an expression backed by conviction leads to a commitment to a way of life.

R.B. Braithwaite suggests that religious assertions serve primarily an ethical function. Ethical statements express speaker's adherence to a certain policy of action. They express the intention of the asserter to act in a particular sort of way specified in the assertion. Religious statements similarly express and recommend a commitment to a certain general policy or way of life. Braithwaite says;

A religious assertion for me, is the assertion of an intention to carry out a certain behaviour policy, subsumable under a sufficiently general principle to be a moral one, together with the implicit or explicit statement, but not the assertion, of certain stories.\textsuperscript{11}

Religious utterances entail a kind of existential commitment to follow an agapeistic (other-centred) life. The significant distinction between one religion and the other consists in stories, parables and myths. The stories are significant even though not true. Stories are relatively peripheral where as statement like "God loves mankind" is central to religious discourse.

Like Braithwaite, Hepburn also says that sense of commitment is central to the religious discourse. But he goes beyond Braithwaite in insisting that the stories and parables must be coherent and lively enough to succeed in influencing people to lead a religious life.

The parable and its associated pattern of behaviour legislates not for any fraction of the believer's life but for every aspect of it. It commands his supreme loyalty and determines his total imaginative vision of nature and man.  

Religious statements are meaningful in their native context - they have logic of their own, logical stipulation being satisfied and communicational stipulation being reinforced. Now the question is, whether religious language is cognitive or non-cognitive? There is a confusion about the kind of meaning assigned to religious language. Feffe points out:

To search for a reasonable justification for believing or disbelieving that 'God exists' is to presuppose that the expression 'God exists' is capable of being believed or disbelieved but if it is not an assertion if it carries no cognitive

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content, if it is not an appropriate subject for the adjectives 'true' or 'false', then all traditional argumentation is wasted effort... still some kind of meaning must pertain to language about God, because it is language, as we have seen to which people get deeply attached. It is atleast meaningful to them in the sense of seeming important.¹⁴

If the religious language is not assertive, then what kind of meaning a religious discourse could have? The non-cognitive function of religious language is mainly cognitive and emotive. Inspite of emotive meaning which religious language does have, it is not entirely empty of descriptive definiteness. While employing words about God like 'loving', 'wise' etc. we borrow 'descriptive definiteness' from ordinary usage. Kant says:

Language about God has definiteness (such that even non-cognitive uses logically presuppose) only because of its empirical content, but such language does not properly function to

make empirical assertions or give empirical information.  

Religious language being complex by nature has different sources viz. the religious scriptures, myths, metaphors, models, concerns etc. and therefore it manifests in and, through variant expressions. Exercise of adequate precision is of prime importance in philosophical analysis of religious expressions. We simply cannot throw away religious language as completely nonsense. As C.B. Martin says;

The time is now past when philosophers could feel justified in dismissing religious language as 'non sense' and 'meaningless'. The time of brashness and idol-smashing was well-spent, but it is past.  

The analytic philosopher of religion is conscious of the fact that;

There is much that we do not know, and there is much that we do not

15. Ibid., p.352.

understand. There are mysteries beyond number that the limits of our understanding will not allow as to fathom. But this surely is no place for disagreement between the theist and the atheist.¹⁷

Religious language functions in a variety of ways. Among these features some are fundamental or basic whereas others are peripheral. But all features relate to the nature of concepts. All concepts are necessarily anthromorphic. It may be quite arbitrary and selective to use certain features as basic features contrary to others. To one interpreter, a particular feature may be basic whereas for others it may not be so. Apart from this, there is yet another point of consideration, i.e., concept and meaning it enjoys. Some concepts may be basic, some are not. So, it may be aptly suggested that if any attempt of selection is arbitrary and one has but to select, then such arbitrariness is to be waived or condoned. Now that the position regarding the basic features of religious language is somewhat clear. It may be claimed that religion (in general, for philosophy considers everything in its generality and not otherwise) and, for that matter,

¹⁷. Ibid.
religious language may have the following basic features:

a. evokes and expresses self-commitment;
b. recommends a way of life;
c. declares an intention to act in a particular way and endorses a set of moral principles;
d. proposes a distinctive self-understanding and engenders characteristic attitudes towards human existence;
e. expresses religious experiences, faith, belief, concern, commitment, revelation;
f. explains religious phenomena — attitude, activities and prayer-worship etc; and
g. adopts various methods- myths, models and paradigms to interpret and re-interpret religious facts and experiences.

These features have generally attracted serious attention of philosophers of religion. Religion being a complex comprehensive system is articulated through the concepts of man, world, God etc. Most religions operate with the concepts, of course, differently or diversely. Accordingly systems operating with God or without God are theological- atheological respectively. Religions have been classified as primitive, traditional, classical-natural- revealed religion and so on. Again there are orthodox, catholic or protestant religions.
The basic features of religious language or in other words, the basic concepts in use in the religious framework may be put to scrutiny to gain further insight. Among these, some such root concepts; faith, belief and reason seem to be philosophically problematic, requiring more and more serious attention in the arena of logic of religion.

Now, it is worthwhile to undertake the analysis of religious concepts with the help of analytical techniques and tools with special reference to meaning in general, faith, belief and reason in particular as the root concepts. Religio-theological language forms a system comprising the framework, presuppositions, facts and interpretations. Thus, the framework presents the presuppositions as the back-drop foundation, and facts as activities, expressions and interpretations and makes up a unity of thinking. Postponing analysis of the aforesaid concepts in the forthcoming chapters a glance through the over-all picture of the logic of the religious expressions is called for.

Traditional treatment meted to religious language has been guided mainly by logic which is subservient to religio-theological purposes influenced by different forces such as non-intellectual, psychological, metaphysical or more particularly ontological. In these, there was an
indistinct place for logic of language governed by reason or rational methods. Sporadic attempts were made to weigh the emphasis of reason which was overshadowed by one-sided importance laid on faith and experiences. Until the age of reason in the modern era, this was the state of religion. With the advent of rationalism, empiricism, critical philosophy of Kant, his pure and practical reason, Hegel's synthesis, the reason began to improve its credibility and status. It is interesting to note that logic which was confined to reasoning with the words, terms and concepts began to be operated through propositions. Gradually logic was made free from the influences of ontology, psychology and other such discourses. Thus logic of propositions, judgments, and systems came to be developed.

Among the most important consequences, the manifold logic of religious language was found to cover:

Meaningless or pseudo-statements, vacuous and self-contradictory, analogical, cognitive, non-cognitive, quasi-cognitive, convictional, mythical-metaphorical-miracle, and symbolic.

Broadly speaking, one of the two approaches is known as 'non-cognitive', the other being 'cognitive' which really is the hallmark of the analysis of religious
language. The purport of the two significant approaches to logic of religious language is:

(a) Religious language is empirical and object language having the same 'cognitive' meaning as the factual statements — *cognitive*;

(b) religious language is meaningful in a sense although different from that of factual statements — *non-cognitive*.

The two wings of philosophical approach, cognitivistic and non-cognitivistic mark the cross-road in religio-conceptual analysis. It is interesting, however, to mark that the distinction in the dichotomy of Cognitivism-Non-cognitivism is arbitrary in the field of language as Srivastava observes rightly:

There is hardly any cognitive process which is totally devoid of non-cognitive elements. Similarly no non-cognitive process can be conceived of without passing through cognitive procedures. Man reacts to his environment as a whole and the so-

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called object language also betrays the involvement of the emotion, affiliation and affection of the person using it. The difference between scientific language and religious language is due to the difference of object-significance.\[19\]

Generally, the Positivistic-empiricistic challenges, conceptual relativism and allied philosophical movements in pre-analytical as well as analytical mode of investigation were included under the broad caption 'non-cognitivism' whereas these movements were soon critically viewed. As a result of such critical inquiry, certain quite different directions became visible; for example, the epochmaking 'Oxford debate' coined as a 'new movement' in the philosophical theology, specifically the contributions of R.M.Hare in his theory of bliks, R.B.Braithwaite's (quasi-cognitivism), Zuurdeeg's convictional theory, Paul Tillich's Symbolic theory could be cited. It may be recalled that though some kind of analysis in search of meaning of religious language was attempted in the recent past, these were not on the lines of conceptual mode of analysis.

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Faith is logically bound up with other important concepts in the religious framework. The 'signification situation' the pre-requisite to meaning of faith and the religious language as a whole, irrespective of any of its fabrics, may it be, belief, prayer, worship, ways of living, thinking and valuing, concern, commitment, attitudes, encounter, revelation, trust, grace and any other religio-theological activities. No activity, no theory could be talked about if it does not embody a tincture of faith, more so, significant article of faith.

It is worth-citing that the central concept of religious language is 'faith' which needs sympathetic yet painstakingly critical re-examination with the aid of 'reason' against possible dangers of erosion by scepticism and dogmatism. This has not been accepted in the realm of logic of religious language because of the simple fact that religion embodies expressions of a quite peculiar as well as widely different conceptual pattern. In other words, religion enjoys, unlike other discourses, manifold logic of language. Justification of meaningfulness is the target of analytical thinkers contrary to declaration of meaninglessness attributed to religious language.

The charge that religion expresses faith and faith-propositions are cognitively meaningless has been replied
adequately. Davis suggests certain clues to the problem of meaningfulness of faith. In his words: "The believer's faith, whether religious or secular, is very often part of his personal reason for faith, his own self-image".20 Our ultimate commitments, or blikse are such that they involve our own personal identities so that we cannot more easily give up such faith as we cannot give up our self-image. As Hick argues.

Faith is a "total interpretation"; and "does often possess more certitude than is evidently warranted: it opens up an entirely new outlook on life that goes far beyond the original act of faith .... Any way, this does not mean that people believe in un-evidenced propositions as faith. A person may be on more fare of an "article of faith"21 than the evidence strictly entitles him to be, but he will not believe an article of faith that is not supported by what he sees as convincing evidence. Faith is a conviction but conviction does not rule out rational justification. Meaning is central to any consideration, religious or otherwise, hinging with the question of reason and for that matter anything else covered by rationality.


21. ibid., pp.84-85.
As meaning is central to any philosophic discourse, philosophers have sought to analyze the meaning of meaning. Frege-Meinong and Russell-Moore-Ayer-Wittgenstein and also Mackie-Strawson-Swinburne techniques happen to face the hazards of meaning in general and religion in particular compelling to resort to one of the variety of meanings assigned by convention to meaning. Of all these, *significance* or, more appropriately, *signification* as *meaning* of meaning has gained currency to be instantiated here from the celebrated critique, F. Férré who takes pains to elucidate it in, "The manifold logic of Theism".

It transpires from the painstaking analytical exploration of logic of religion that for any understanding of religious language in which the faith-content are expressed, the complexity of the whole linguistic situation is to be carefully measured. An expression is an interpretic function of its language. It occurs in a situation and not in an isolation. Through penetrating analysis by sustained arguments, Férré offers a clean picture of linguistic signification which he coins "signification situation". Religio-theological expressions emerge from different sources, viz. the scriptures, authorities, myths, metaphors, miracles, stories, models, convictions, commands, concerns, attitudes and experiences. It is expedient to concentrate on testing the relevance,
competence of such analytical technique in understanding of religious discourse: "For an understanding of theological discourse, therefore, the principles of functional analysis requires that we listen to the explanation offered by theologians themselves concerning their language". Férré spells out three fundamental notions to highlight: improper function, familiar function and unique function.

The "Improper Functions", as Férré coins it has its reasons in the persons employing religio-theological discourse are not fully at home in the logical analysis of their speech. The business of the theologian is to use the language for his purpose and not to philosophise it in the sense of logical analysis. In discovering such character of religious language, skilled employment of functional analysis would be required. R.M.Hare is very straightforward to put it,

... Many of the logical problems raised are not such as can be dealt with by logical amateurs. For this reason some who know very well how to use religious language have not been able to give a very convincing account of its use, just as some gardeners can

22 F.Feffe, op.cit., p.66.
grow very good vegetables without being able to tell us clearly or even correctly how they do it.\textsuperscript{23}

Férré undertakes to critical appreciation of another contemporary analytic philosopher C.B. Martin's views and observes:

Martin is convinced, therefore, that the patient uncovering of the real functions of theological discourse will lead to a clear understanding of the logical confusions and mistakes which disqualify it, such an approach via functional analysis will be more effective against theological muddle than the more sweeping program of verificational analysis.\textsuperscript{24}

To expound the familiar functions, Férré makes useful references to illustrious thinkers like Mackinnon, Braithwaite, Mascall, Hepburn, Hare and Wisdom and shows the underlying uniformity in analysis of religious language. He observes:


\textsuperscript{24} Férré, \textit{L.L.G.}, \textit{op.cit.}, p.113.
The accounts of the uses of theological discourse which we have examined in this chapter have increased in complexity. From the simple suggestion that the function of theological speech is to 'reassure', through the more highly developed 'existential', 'ethical' and quasi-factual views to the subtle interweaving of several functions in the 'attention-directing' interpretation, the sincere attempt has been made to appreciate realistically, the essential use or uses of theological language.25

The unique functions of theological discourse are brought to the bold relief on the strength of analysis conducted so strenuously by the analytical thinkers, R.M.Hare, J.J.C.Samart, E.L.Allen, William Zuurdeeg, I.T.Ramsey and Ian Crombie. From the elaborate critical examination of these analytical strands, it may suffice to mention about R.M.Hare's 'quasi-factual' function of theological statements. "Our whole commerce with the world

depends upon our blik about the world and that differences between bliks about the world cannot be settled by observation of what happens in the world".26

It is evident, however that any given "article of faith" is justified in terms of the religious framework of which it is an integral part. Religious belief is self-authentic and each religion has its own logic. Zuurdeeg27 interprets religious language as 'Convictional'. In religious language the content of speech owes its significance to the speaker. That is because, it is self-authentic. According to him, "there are neither scientific nor philosophic proof which validate or invalidate any conviction".

So, meaning of religious language renders to be convictional in the sense that it is not only conviction of the speaker but it also generates conviction in the hearer. Unlike other language, it is self-verifying and attitudinal. It is as a conviction or a commitment to a way of life. It is akin to Braithwaite’s characterisation of religious language as ethical and policy-specifying. Thus as he says:


27. W.F.Zuurdeeg, op.cit., p.45.
A religious assertion for me, is the assertion of an intention to carry out a certain behaviour policy, subsumable under a sufficiently general principle to be a moral one, together with the implicit or explicit statement, but not the assertion, of certain stories.  

Contemporary Philosophers argued that religious utterances are non-cognitive expressions of emotion. For example, A.J.Ayer declared that meaning of religious language as a whole, is emotive. These utterances do not assert anything, true or false. For the emotivists, religious claims are paradoxical but soon after it was argued that such a contention was also unsound because there are religious utterances which assert something. These are understood by the hearer and as such "religious language makes use of all modes of speech characteristic of cognitive discourse."  

Religious symbols do exactly the same job as all non-religious ordinary symbols. They open up a level of reality which otherwise is not available, not visible to but rather hidden from us. This is what Tillich calls 'itself', the depth-dimension of reality, the ground or locus of every other depth-dimension. This, he treats as the fundamental concern of man, sometime he feels it as 'total concern'. Such symbols open up the experience of this depth in the human soul. If it ceases to function, then it dies. If new symbols are born, they emerge out of changed relationship to be the ultimate ground of being i.e., to the Holy. Symbols of religion are symbols of the Holy; they participate in the Holy and therefore, are not the Holy itself. The Holy is transcendent. The ultimate, the total, mean the Absolute. The Holy transcends the symbols but this is the evidence of their tremendous tenacity characteristic of all religious symbols. Of course, Tillich as a mid-twentieth century contemporary thinker has not introduced the facet of symbolism to religion but seems to have unfolded the crux of symbolism in a systematic way for the first time to merit appreciation.

Paul Tillich thus reexamined the nature of religious symbolism in his way with characteristic originality. His philosophy of religion centres round the existential predicaments with philosophic temper. This is because of
his *conviction* that religion is a human as well as *existential* undertaking. Moreover, the intimate relation between them is too inextricable. Tillich, like many, seems to be moved with deep intensity for human predicaments but nonetheless, made tremendous impact on religion and theology as well as their philosophies.

In what follows, quite different facets of analysis have been undertaken. Beside the verificational and functional analysis are given emphasis. Basing on the serious yet delightful survey, conducted by Férré, it may be easy to follow the logical traditions to the exclusion of other historical questions of origin or exegesis in order to keep the present task within its confines. Of such contemporary logical traditions, the ones concerning 'analogy', 'obedience' and 'encounter' are indeed fascinating. We have considered the issue of analogy in Aquinas, the originator of the doctrine previously. It would suffice now to wind up the discussion with Férré:

*To interpret the logic of analogy in this way is to depart from tradition and to abandon what metaphysically minded theologians have sought in these doctrines, but the metaphysical value of analogy has in any case been*
shown to be wanting, while its usefulness for the understanding of the syntactic dimension of theological language may prove to be considerable.30

In the context of 'the logic of obedience', in course of scrutiny, Férré contends that justification of language in its theological application is the obedience of faith as held by the tradition. Philosophy can be kept true to itself only by means of faith. It was deemed to be an autonomous natural reason as Torrence31 puts it. Then he accounts for the place of reason in determining objectivity, criticism and rationality and rejects all other responses as ipso facto irrational. The logic of obedience, is consistent with genuine rationality, objectivity and criticism.

According to Ramsey religious language has its significance and it is not meaningless or nonsensical although it appears to be odd language to be considered at par with art and poetry. In Ramsey's words,

I am saying that a useful antidote to the craze for straightforward language might be found in suitable doses of poetry or greater familiarity with the curiously odd words thrown up in scientific theories.\(^{32}\)

William Zuurdeeg offers a uniquely theological logic. The gist of his elaborate treatment finds place in philosophical analysis termed as convictional interpretation. Convictional language like indicative language refers to something which is real for its user. Unlike indicative language, convictional language refers to 'all the reality there is', not to some aspects of reality as that of the language of sciences. Consequently it has deeper roots in the personality of the user. For Zuurdeeg, religious language and moral language are both convictional. Again, the difference between the languages of theological and metaphysical discourse is that the former is convictional whereas the latter possesses purely a rational basis. That Zuurdeeg is a strong devout of convictional language 'we are our own convictions'. The logic of religious language is outright convictional—'There are neither scientific nor philosophical proofs or

arguments which can validate or invalidate any conviction.  

Christianity, as a human activity, involves much more than simply believing certain propositions about matters of fact, such as that there is a God, that he created this world, that He is our judge. But it does involve believing these things and this believing is, in a sense, fundamental; not that it matters more than the other things that a Christian does, but that it is presupposed in the other things that he does, or in the manner in which he does them.

To wind up the discussions which serves as the backdrop of analytical rethinking of the logic of religious language, particularly of faith, it is worthwhile to rearrange the religio-conceptual system. Many significant statements, e.g. "God loves men", "God loves us as a father


loves his children*, "Trust in God" etc. are articles of faith. The conspicuous feature of any religious discourse is the world-view which the religious person holds, sustains, nourishes and does not part with under any circumstance.