CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION
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Philosophical scrutiny reveals numerous hazards and hurdles. In order to hit out the hazards, or as Wittgenstein said "free the humming bee out of the fly-bottle", we set the problem in beginning. Our main problem was whether and how far is the logic of faith meaningful. In order to deal with the problem, we glanced through the basic features of faith. It appeared then that there was great stress on 'faith' as the key-concept for understanding religious language. We, therefore earnestly started looking into the conceptual status of faith with adequate care. But as it was soon felt that faith in order to be significant, if at all it is so must be attested by reason. So we adopted rational means of inquiry and examined the palpability of faith in the epistemological setting on the basis of reason as the touchstone.

The word faith has "idiosyncratic platitude" i.e. every word has its own logic.

* The game-theory exhibits language as "form of life", "a way of performance and behaviour"¹. The Investigations account of meaning in terms of language games is comprehensive and determinate enough to make possible the

application of these concepts to the specific cases of religious language vis-a-vis religious life.

It is with this renovation in the concepts of meaning, techniques of analysis, and principles of the method of investigation that theological and religious discourse could be reflected upon with analytical probity, sympathetic consideration of interpretations and unprejudiced scrutiny. Matching this approach, religion or more appropriately language of religion needs to be assessed.

In religion, religious ideas and activities do not have explicit meanings. One runs into ambiguity when questions are asked outside the proper context in which they have their meanings. For example, in respect of Jewish and Christian religious language games, such questions, Was Jesus-a-Messiah? may be grasped or answered differently in the respective language-games. This is also true in case of actions, gestures and worships- and other religious phenomena. Myths, parables, stories appear in their religious contexts quite variantly in different religious language-games. Of course, what is philosophically important is the meaning in which they are resorted. In other words, "they mean what they do because of their connections with other parts of religious systems and its
It is enlightening to think with Danovan the way in which he relates games to language in his simple and straight-forward observation:

Statements in religious language, like moves in games, are context-dependent. It has thus become quite common amongst philosophers of religion to speak of the way language is used in a certain religious tradition as the language game of that religion. That way of speaking is a useful reminder that misunderstanding and confusion are likely to result if statements are taken away from their context, and analysed without regard to the usual circumstances in which they are uttered, the moves they are used to make, and the point of the game as a whole.³

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Among other tenets, Trigg labours very hard after the key concepts of relativism and rationality leading to his conclusion;

Closely linked with questions about commitment are questions concerning concepts. Since we live in one world with which our beliefs may or may not correspond, the interesting questions should not merely be what concepts we have, but also whether they properly reflect reality. In recent years the preoccupations of philosophers with conceptual analysis has sometimes blinded them to problems about the adequacy of our concepts. If there are different ways of relations conceiving reality, it is not enough to describe them. We cannot avoid choosing between them. To deny this can be done on a rational basis involves us in the incoherence of conceptual relativism.

As we have seen, Wittgenstein opened new vistas in philosophical analysis in general. His treatment of

religious faith and language was rather an application of the general technique.

D.Z. Phillips for instance is an illustrious philosopher-critic who considers of religion as a distinctive language-game. According to him:

It is our desire to look beyond the language-games involved in religious beliefs and rituals which makes it difficult for us to see how Wittgenstein's full stop has any application here. We may be unable to see its application even when we can see its application elsewhere clearly.⁵

Phillip says again that "Belief in God, is represented as a means to a further end. The end is all important, the means relatively unimportant. Belief in God has a point only if certain consequences follow".⁶

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Thus very boldly, Phillips argues that belief of a person cannot be said to have been created by any reason. So he continues to hold on to his contention that religious discourses distinctive language-games;

Misgivings about philosophical characterization of religious beliefs as distinctive language-games not only lead to attempts to give an external justifications of religious values, but also to attempts both by philosophers who are sympathetic and by philosophers who are unsympathetic to religion to show that their conclusions are reached by criteria of rationality which their opponents do or ought to accept unless believers of rationality, it is said, then the misgivings about religious beliefs being esoteric games cannot be avoided.\(^7\)

Phillips stresses how certain philosophers have tried to show why religious beliefs are important or have tried

\(^7\) ibid., p.126.
to show the rationality of religious beliefs by assuming the existence of God by any criteria whatsoever. But according to him such attempt is not satisfactory as it often falsifies the absolute character of many religious beliefs. However, he further argues:

Against this, it might be urged that, in my view, religious believers can say what they like. Such a reaction is strengthened when philosophers talk of language-games as having criteria of intelligibility within them and of the impossibility of rendering one language-game unintelligible in terms of criteria of intelligibility taken from another. 8

Phillips puts forth the claim that religious beliefs can then be described literally as a game, a neat set of rules with ever increasing refinements.

All one can say is that people respond in this way. Many who respond in one way will find the other responses

shallow, trivial, fantastic, meaningless, or even evil. But the force of the response cannot be justified in any external way; it can merely be shown. This is tone of religious responses, the religious beliefs which have an absolute character and value. Philosophy may clarify certain misunderstandings about them. It may show the naivety of certain objections to religion, or that some so-called religious beliefs are superstitions. But philosophy is neither for nor against religious beliefs. After it has sought to clarify the grammar of such beliefs its work is over.⁹

In this context, the following remarks may be of adequate referential value. To think with Patrick Sherry, for instance;

... the importance of religious beliefs does not lie in the proofs or reasoning which support them, but in

⁹. ibid., p.142.
the way things regulate our lives. For instance, if I believe in a Last Judgement, this is not a question of expecting a future event like a war, but of living with a certain picture before me and using this to influence my conduct. The question of evidence is irrelevant. 10

The activities of interpreting and participating consist link the beliefs and the truth-claims of a religion. Some of these phenomena will be extra-ordinary and unique, others quite ordinary and familiar. The language-game theory helps us to see the nature and consequences of belief for behaviour and the subtlety in the language associated with the beliefs in working out these consequences.

Religion is thought to be the sort of thing that Wittgenstein terms 'form of life' and therefore 'be accepted' (P.I: p.226). Religious expressions are language-games; autonomous with their own rules. Wittgenstein is a fideist, relativist and realist in his view of religious beliefs. He was concerned chiefly with

the role which religious belief played in man's life, distinguished religious belief from other beliefs. Such distinction was grounded by him on the degree of influence of particular belief on every part of man's life.

It may be vouchsafed that faith so akin and inseparable an element in all the religious activities can never be dissociated from the forms of life—"to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life". Likewise, to imagine a religious conceptual framework means to imagine a "significant article of faith" may be an appropriate explication in terms of Wittgensteinian theory of language-games, subject to further scrutiny in the context of faith, commitment and reason.

Apropos language-games, we are reminded once again, "there is no sin, there is no virtue"—"thus the game is played"—'games' do have "family resemblance"—and we obtain insights in certain games—typical responses to a variety of situations. In considering some features concerning analogy, myth, metaphor and miracle, faith, behaviour-policy, symbolism etc. these seemed to be afoot on meaningfulness with varied signification-situations.

The multiple games are all built on a rock-pillar of foundation, i.e. faith. Retiring to faith, we have learnt
after protracted analysis that faith needs rational justification in order to be free from dogma and doubt.

It is to say that faith as such by its logic examined may be crushed, lost or abandoned but not falsified or contradicted. Of course, our probe into the logical status of faith by reason, or rational means of test, has shown that it is not immune to criticism as once thought to be. The bilateral risk of faith is dogma and doubt. Hence while faith is open to criticism, as is expressed in the phrase, "Credo ut intelligence" replaced by "dubito ut intelligence", it has to be railed through proper rational scrutiny in order that the real significance is made out. In this context, we are reminded of the concluding remarks of Mitchell:

The Christian once he has committed himself, is precluded by his faith from taking up the first attitude: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God". He is in constant danger as Flew has observed, of slipping into the third. But he need not and if he does, it is a failure in faith as well as in logic, which do hold good in spite of Flew's contention: "Mitchell's response to this challenge is
admirably direct, straight forward and understanding".\textsuperscript{11}

The verificationist charge as well as the falsificationist attack have been suitably treated and anatomised to the extent of being made quite inappropriate to the logic of religious language. The brighter aspects of such movement have, however been assimilated and developed. One of these aspects which could not so far been adjudged and brought to light is that concerning 'faith', more particularly "significant articles of faith".

Religious discourse is really a very vast area and any philosophical reflection must go along the lines of its "manifold logic", not only in what is expressed but in what the expressions signify; about the language-using agent or interpreter and about the 'something' or the content signified. Keeping these indispensable aspects of "any genuine signification situation" in view, it may be of real worth to pursue the manifold logic of faith in order to be benefitted by real insights.

The most important of the basic features of religious language is faith. All other features seem to have very

\textsuperscript{11} B. Mitchell (ed.) \textit{op.cit.}, The Philosophy of Religion, p.20.
strong footing on the root concept, faith. Being fundamental to each and all other features examined and not examined presently, for example, commitment, concern, attitude, myth, metaphor, parables, stories, behaviour policy, symbolism as have been highlighted but many others like scriptural, moral, worship and prayer, eschatological and existential expressions etc. could not find place in view of selective approach adopted to keep up precision. Whatever sphere or situation, in our humble view, one may choose to take up, it would at the end reveal to him that such activities, concepts and interpretations are, in some way or the other, at the base, grounded on faith. So, logic of religious language is basically logic of faith. Religious expression, in this consideration, are "significant articles of faith" open to rational inquiry and criticism for confirmation by actual "signification situations". Faith is to the inquirer what the pole star is to the sailor: it has "manifold logic" unfolding, in and through its ramification the logic of religious language; but a competent and sympathetic inquirer must implore before explore.

From the point of view that is forthcoming out of the present overhauling of the meaning of faith, it transpires that there is no single focal meaning of such language. It is however, clear from free thinking that of all the concepts, faith stands out to be most reliably the pivot of religion and religious language. Reason, revelation, belief or for that matter, any other concept is subservient to faith by nature, meaning and use. Faith is the receptacle to accommodate all these concepts. Faith is the foundation which supports them all. Better, we hold, for faith these concepts are all logical correlatives and semantic extensions. The Bible is vocal relating to faith as the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen etc.. It means that the beginning and the end of religious thinking and acting is faith. We have seen how it is related to knowledge. Unless there is a 'know-claim', no knowing or known takes place. May be, factual knowledge as in case of empirical discourses, such as science is of a different order and its certainty may be acceptable or preferable to that of faith but it is undeniable that faith forms the basis of certainty in the know-claim. How could any certainty be achieved without its origin in faith? So faith may be uncertain as a know-claim or pre-knowledge but this does not mean that it makes faith completely uncertain or absurd.
Kant, therefore found it necessary to deny knowledge to make room for faith. Faith plays a very powerful role in practical reason. Thus what Hick holds as "the illative sense" comes fast to the critic's notice:

It will be convenient to introduce Newman's theory of informal inference and its correlative illative sense, by contrast with the view against which he was reacting. This may be called rationalism, in one of that term's several uses.  

Paul Schmidt has classified belief into four groups: rational, a rational, irrational and non-rational. This is enough as a testimony to the fabrics of faith that so firmly and tightly fasten up the neighbouring concepts in the religious conceptual network. If such is the position of faith, its logic is the logic of commitment, par excellence. The function of faith as commitment above all is not knowing but making of or becoming man. Religion is said to be a manmaking aura. Faith is thus a multitudinous and attitudine concept. If it is so, its

15. Paul Schmidt, op.cit, p. 79.
multi-dimensional meaning and status could be comprehended by the spirit of unbiased analytical re-appraisal with "both philosophical competence and a sympathetic understanding of the subject-matter, upon which it is exercised. It is perhaps, unnecessary to add that in this, as in other branches of philosophy, simple and definitive solutions are rarely to be found"\textsuperscript{16} as Mitchell, the architect of the tenet "significant articles of faith", remarks.

To reemphasise, it may be added here that \textit{faith} is the be-all and end-all of the religious person. It is interesting to mark Wittgenstein's remarks that one thing of which he is indubitably certain is that every human being on this earth had two parents, but he adds that Catholics do not believe this. Yet, when I was a Catholic, I do not remember that the virgin birth of Christ posed any particular problem for me or even that it seemed especially strange. Thus saying, Anthony O' Hear brings out the "fundamental fact about religion". According to O' Hear, "It(faith) is something much more like an all-encompassing set of attitudes to human life and world, a context, in which one's whole life, including one's cognitive life is

O’Hear characterises faith: “A satisfactory philosophical account of religion must acknowledge this fundamental fact about religion, that for believers faith is overwhelmingly a matter of living and of acting”. So, as has been shown in the appropriate space in the present work, faith includes knowledge and for that matter, even reason and rationalism. It has been claimed as the fundamental attitude or commitment.

Enormous dust in the religio-philosophical atmosphere to elicit further serious scrutiny of the key concepts and provoke researchers who are expected to look into the guidelines in acceptance or rejection. In any case, however, the present research merits penetrating re-thinking.

18. ibid.