

Symbolic semantics in philosophy and anthropology

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ABSTRACT--*Symbolism is a crucial part of social heritage including cultural, religious and scientific levels. However, the social anthropology cannot give up the use of symbolism due to its importance in day to day life. The paper clarifies that symbolism is a significant part of social development in all fields including anthropology. The language used by people; it merely consists of a system of symbols. Therefore, symbolism has become a means to express the status of man's life. The paper refers to many and various cases and supply examples from certain communities which proves that symbolism is an essential part of these communities but it is not intrusive. The research consists of five sections; the first discusses scholars' opinions man's social history and how social interaction had a positive effect in developing communities via using language. The second section deals with the interaction between symbolism and anthropology in which symbolism is indispensable for anthropology. The third section concerns with the process of symbols interpretation within social setting. The fourth section tackles how symbolism has become a crucial part in social and cultural structure in any society in the past and the present. Finally, the research is ends up with conclusion which recapitulates the main points of the paper.*

Keywords--- *Semantics in Philosophy, Points of the Paper. truth or frankness*

I. INTRODUCTION

Most of philosophers and thinkers states that man is a social being. An individual cannot achieve his goal in life without a help from the society and mingling with it (Yosif Karam, 183). In other words, the social prospect of man cannot be accomplished without the interaction with his/ her environment. It is noticed that social gathering is a significant to enhance and develop the individual, By social interaction, man's mind prospers the intellectual and the moral deeds. The most important media of communication is spoken, written languages and visual signs which constitute a vital role in man's thinking along the history. Furthermore, the signification of signs have significant effect on meaning production in man's thinking; for instance, using idiom of knowledge and the relationship between sounds and concepts consider as a sign with certain signification (Maan Ziad, 65). A sign expresses an image or a meaning of a sense. It embodies the meaning of an object. However, the reality of sign cannot express the meaning of an object by referring to its nature; in other words, there is no natural relationship between a sign and the object referring to it. In the old civilization, the relationship between sign and object is natural where a sound suggest the meaning of the object, although, ancient societies used to employ same amount of signs as we use

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in the present time. Putting it differently, in the past, unlike the present time, the relationship between sign and an object is natural. For instance, the name of gods or goddess are believed to be natural expressing the properties of these gods or goddess. However, in the reality, the relationship between sign and object is arbitrary (Hanry Frankfort, 24). For old societies, an image or a sign resembles what it refers completely or partially; for instance a name can be a substitute for what it refers. For ancient Egyptian, there was interconnection between concept and object. For instance, when they inscribe the name of their enemies on rocks or pottery plates and destroy then conduct a funeral procession has a significance in order to sabotage their enemies later. The old Egyptians think that hypothetical killing of their enemies has a real impact on them (Hanry Frankfort, 25). There were many similar cases in old heritages. Significantly the use of symbolism in various societal fields is a sort of necessity and incapability of man to express the truth which might be characterized as bitter causing hurt to those who utter it. Thus, using symbols or signs is significant to hide part of the truth or frankness (Hassan Shondy, 2).

II. SYMBOLISM AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Perhaps, there is no a school or a tendency as clear as the school of symbolism. According to the field of knowledge, the term symbol has multiple meanings; that makes some scholar of the field describe symbolism as vague or ambiguous because symbols are attracted to some complicated fields of knowledge such as semiotics, anthropology, logic, psychology. Furthermore, for them, the concept of symbol has multiple- perspective corresponding to the field of knowledge. Symbolism is opposite to hermeneutics. The latter means to interpret the actual truth about a thing or an object; that is achieved via intellectual capabilities which might fail to interpret the meaning of a thing completely. Perhaps, hermeneutics means to differentiate between pronunciation of a sign to reach the metaphoric signification without destroying the real meaning of that sign. Putting it differently, to name a thing with what it resembles to that thing or to compare that thing to other thing having similar properties. That is accomplished in figurative way rather than realistic. Moreover, hermeneutics means to grammaticalize the real meaning of an object to apparent meaning to that object for persuasion. All the process occurs through using symbols which neglect the surface meaning of a thing and focuses on deep meaning in attempt to reveal its hidden reality.

The concept of symbolism has helped many secret religious tendencies to hide certain truths from ruling authorities. For that reason, it has become a social and scholarly phenomenon used in various fields of knowledge such as scientific, artistic and literary fields as well as social fields of anthropology. It is noticed that symbols are used by philosopher to focus on intellectual side more than social side. For them, symbolism is an intellectual concept, employed to delineate social phenomena. It is a kind of instrument invented by man who is described as a social being. Putting it differently, symbolism is a starting point to understand cultural and intellectual institutions. It is a tool used to ensure the social connection (Levi- Strauss, 411).

Anthropology considers as a valuable field in the man's history which has helped him/ her to discover their selves to be aware about existence. Via anthropology, researchers have recorded the differences among

communities in the study of anthropology along the history; these differences have been attributed to the nature of the environment. The philosophers, historians and researchers in human heritage have a significant role in discovering the activities of social man. Thus, the importance of anthropology is to study the differences and similarities among the societies according to the standard of their living, excluding the study of civilization.

III. SECTION THREE

3.1 The sides of symbolic representation

Old man understood the fact of the social life he used to live in; that was manifested in the traces referring to his/ her understanding which showed the mentality. Such humanistic mentality enhances many legendary and religious or social thoughts as well as other cultural fields. It is easy for old man to realize the use of symbol intentionally or unintentionally; nevertheless, we have found out many of practices and religious rituals, social habits and customs which were expressed symbolically. It is observed that a symbol used to be viewed as associated with what is sacred (MaenZiadeh, 66). It is due to the fact that legends used to be prevalent in the old societies which were considered as sacred texts or provisions same as religious text.

Symbolism often used to be a tool of representation due to its religious or anthropological dimensions. It is probable to be used to participate in social life for all people; that is the main principle for the field of anthropology. The contemporary man cannot neglect symbolism in his/ her various fields of life; in broader sense, everything in life is expressed via symbolism; for instance, we have symbols for our name and a symbol for the place we work in where that symbol expresses to nature of the specialized job. However, all fields of social life cannot exist without symbolism since the formation of the first communities. Symbolism is indispensable for an individual within in society; for instance, object in our surrounding cannot be signified without the use of symbolism which is a reference to the existence of things around us. Symbolism exists in various fields of arts, culture, science, and religion. In addition, the memories of man can be expressed via symbols which are considered as rules regulating the holy and humanistic justice.

In Philosophy, symbolism concerns as an attempt to go beyond the actuality, reaching to a world of organizing thoughts as we have found out in Plato' vision who discovered the system of idealistic conception of things. Also, it has discovered in Aristotle's metaphysics which represents the intellectual range of his conception for spiritual world. Furthermore, symbolism is expressed in the other philosophical systems of those philosophers who have conducted a sophisticated system of thoughts, expressed in conceptions or formulated symbols, manifesting in the reality philosophy (in the fields of mathematics and metaphysics). That can be manifested in social reality as well. Nevertheless, social symbolism can be expressed indirectly as reference to psychological sides of man which considers as a reality man's life.

Symbolism incarnates the reality and summarizes it as symbols or signs expressing their contents in consensus with whole community; in other words, symbols signify to social meaning of things existed in our environment.

However, symbolism does not mean to be a way from reality as informed by the field of literature because the religious practices which concern with the participation of the Creator in man' life by implementing religious rituals, representing a sort of justice between man and his Lord. What does distinct a group of people from the other is the type of symbolism employed to refer to that group ethnically or religiously; for instance, the cross, crescent and other mathematical symbols. Moreover, using symbolism can be exploited for psychoanalytical field, whereas dreams play very significant role, expressing the contemplating reality.

Thus, the process of realizing the environment cannot be achieved without using a language which consists symbols for every social heritage; and the practices of these symbols anchored in social life not opposite to it. Although, some attitudes view a human language is a slow and old instrument for making fast decisions in comparison to swarm language of animal such as bees and birds which characterizes as fast and instantaneous. Putting it differently, human language can be as a barrier to slow down taking fast decisions which might be communicated more effectively in swarm language.

IV. SECTION FOUR

4.1 Symbolism in Social Heritage:

Studies of history and archeological documents and have been constituted as important sources to study anthropology in searching the way of man's living and his natural environment in the past. Furthermore, these documents have referred to record very important events in man's life of the past which are expressed via many ways such as painting, sculpture and the art of inscription on rocks. It is observed that these inscriptions and painting have represented symbolic signification concerning the nature of man's thinking in the past, the way of living and the various means of expressing and behaving. The symbol which expresses the human thought has a vital role a long with the development of man's community, for instance, the invention of instrument was very important symbol of humanistic life. Such invention leads to enhance the status of man and the way of his living. Where the use of various instruments by man express awareness in dealing with the external environment. For instance, agriculture, trading, musical warfare tools are sort of symbols explicating the nature of man's relationship with his/ her environment. The invention of these tools have helped to develop the standard of man's living on environmental and social levels. Where the reality of social life embodies the relationship between man and his/ her environment, resulting development incultural or materialistic levels. Man can benefit from this relationship within time discovering a way to express these thoughts symbolically. The symbolic signification represents the dialectic relationship between man and his environment on one hand; and between man and other people from the other hand. Such relationship expresses the union among various levels of thoughts and social anthropology via symbol because the discovery of alphabets and symbols signify the development of awareness of man in life (Hamid Hamza, 47). However, writing is the most important symbol in the history of the development of human awareness due to its magical and substantial method in expressing human activities on all levels. Writing is embodiment of saying or human voice, describing him/ her as social being requiring to transmit his or her feelings and emotions to

others. For that reason, man has invented writing to express these impulses, associated with psychic impulses expressing images of things where things are realized by the self sensually or intellectually. The images of these things are expressed by symbols agreed to be used by all people of the community (Yosif Karam, 122). The relationship between symbol and meaning is not natural but it is suggested by social convention; that is opposite to the images of things which characterize as having natural relationship to what they refer to.

The religious side has formulated a very important point in the life of human and that will last for good. In the past, man always associated natural events with imagination to signify the unity of existents which are connected with gods. Nevertheless, the history of man on the earth are connected with the history of the gods (Ahmad Muhammed, 24). For that reason, rituals and religious festivals signify the relationship between the two; furthermore, such rituals express the happiness or sorrow of the two. Legend or fable has formulated a very crucial part of man's life in the past, they used to be anecdotes work to neutralize mind or to bias it by exaggerating the occurrences of events and the use of symbol and imagination to express them (Fredrick Fon, 32). The local fable and the legendary anecdotes represent the history of the people; furthermore, they formulate a part of human experiences, expressing the status of social life symbolically. For instance the places of worshipping signify holiness above what is sensed.

Every nation has its own history as a product of materialistic and intellectual achievement. It is often populations have similarities in their cultures and traditions, for instance they believe in God Who is the dominated symbol, administering the affairs of man. Most of the cultural heritages of the previous populations have produced a lot of legendary thought, embodying the status of the social life for those nations which have similarities for large extent in the naming of their gods. Legend is defined as a set of thoughts, beliefs and theoretical rules which associated with experimental reality and contrast with it in some occasions; the language used in the legend consist of symbols having sensual effects. In broader sense, legend considers as a form of language (MaenZiadah, 67). Regardless the positive and negative sides, legend for the old people as a source of art, science and religion; and it considers the beginning of the actual history for humanity (ArnistKasier, 95). Legend participates to achieve the social regulation and it contains answers and justifications to root beliefs and social practices which plays a crucial role in texture of society (MaenZiadah, 67). Moreover, legend represents the primary forms of speech, participating in the development of man who borrow all his/he idioms figuratively from the nature (Kais Al Huri, 76). For the legend, the sun is the main source for all these forms of expressions in the fields of allegory and metaphor which has controlled speech in the eras of man along the history (Ibid).

It is noticed that the organizational side of the society considers as a kind of social and cultural heritage, expressed by symbols. The old constitutions which organized these societies represented the actual relationship between symbolism and anthropology. For instance, laws are signs suggested by legislators to restrain people's life. Therefore, people should interact with these law to live better life. The history of old population has witnessed the interaction and the sold connection between social organization and the symbolism expressing it. Moreover, the civilization of Mesopotamia, the valley of Nile and Greece and other were fine examples. For instance, the manner

of worshipping, customs and social traditions signify various social systems in which gods played very vital role in formulating them and interfere with the details of man. Gods represent love, justice, mercy, love war, evil, virtue and beauty. All these things used to signify a god; for instance, god of love, war, justice etc... Man does not satisfy practicing customs and tradition symbolically but he/ she endeavors to formulate secret religious, political, cultural and economic systems. These systems used to be called symbolically religious or cultural secrets. This manner prevailed most of ancient and medieval worlds; especially, in cultural and religious fields. Many of these populations still comply with this symbolic manner expressing social activities of man which delineates social anthropology.

Symbolism has not been faded, although the modern world witnesses transformation from legendary and primitive thinking which used to reject renewal into contemplation, experiment and accurate observation. It is noticed that symbolism is very significant because of the intersection of man thinking as a product of various social heritages mingling with observation and experiment. Nowadays, symbolism is very important to avoid the interference of religious authorities which was referred in the old philosophy of Greece civilization, medieval philosophy and the beginning of Renaissance.

It is observed that symbolism is very important in the religious heritage. That is clarified in the ancient places of old Iraq and Egypt. For instance, Pyramids in Egypt represent a sort of intellectual and social level of old Egyptians. Furthermore, the religious side is social phenomenon informing thoughts about the life after death of the king and his followers. Also, symbols give an insight about social ties of the Egyptians and pharaoh who represents symbolically the sacred god. In addition, Symbolism plays very significant role in expressing the social status of old Greece in their legends and philosophy since the sixth century B.C in which their philosophy had abundant of symbolic signs. They used to criticize the social and religious status symbolically without triviality. Some of philosophers urged scholars to deepen their thinking to enhance their style to be as equivocal and ambiguous by using symbols and similes (Mohammed Alhadidi, 158). By using such a style, a philosopher or a scholar cannot clarify his thought or conceal it but refers to it (Jaffer Yaseen, 37). The reason of philosophical use of symbolism is to avoid the religious authority which is built on the ignorance of the public who represent the raw material and the effective weapon against scientist and philosophers. Most of philosophers have rejected the prevailing religious thought of the old world a long history, they reject the idea of multiple gods. The first Greek philosopher who rejected idea of gods was Thales who was against the prevailing notion which says that the world is full of Gods (Yosif Karam, 13). The other philosopher was Protagoras who used same way of Thales in rejecting religious thoughts of Greece. Moreover, Aristotle followed Plato's concept who used many symbols to signify the oneness of God.

Temples, social and religious terms are symbols representing social meanings for old Greece; till now they constitute the cultural and humanitarian heritage such as Olympia, marathon, statue of freedom and martyrdom, etc. Furthermore, sculptures which signify the great heritage of the old civilization referring to religious and social meaning which are rooted in the societies. Also, heavenly religions are built on symbolic signification via using

star, crescent, cross and dome as well as the architecture of mosque and churches. Moreover, Symbolism represents various sides of social life; it tell events about the events occurred in the past. It is significant to show the structure of the society man lives in. However, Symbolic signification has become an important part to inform about the heritage of the societies and their modern activities. It is very essential part of social anthropology encompassing all scientific and philosophical sides. We can find it in chemistry, physics, medicine, engineering and various fields of technology. So, symbols have become a language used to communicate between scientist and scholars. Philosophy is never being away from the concept of symbolic signification. Whereas philosophy is very important social activities related with social anthropology, consisting of many symbols and significations some of them related materialistic side and other having psychic. Though language is a mean to communicate feelings and emotion but it may contradict with man's actual existence because language and the existence cannot express each other (Mohammad Hadi, 228). That does not reduce the importance of using symbol in philosophy. The term (symbol) is an instrument to express certain idea having semantic expression; that exists in art, language, mathematics and philosophy. It is described as particular indication to transform the existence into words and help to enhance man's thinking (ArnistKasier, 95). Thus, Symbols express the capability of mind to comprehend the information and use it to formulate organizing system to unify symbols.

V. CONCLUSION

Along the history, Symbolism has become very essential part of social heritage including cultural, religious and scientific levels. However, the social anthropology cannot give up the use of symbolism due to its importance in day to day life. The paper clarifies that symbolism is a significant part of social development in all fields. Moreover, the language used by people; it merely consists of a system of symbols. Therefore, symbolism has become a means to express the status of man's life. Anthropology is a tool affiliated to symbolism because it is the basis of social cultures. According to what is mentioned earlier, the paper refers to many and various cases and supply examples from certain communities which proves that symbolism is an essential part of these communities but it is not intrusive. It is the basis on which every culture is built. Thus, symbolism constitutes a crucial part in structure of an social and cultural system in any society in the past and the present because it is related with scientific, religious and philosophical heritage. In other words, any sign, relationship, or symbol which is uses in our life is a product of civilizational heritage, referring to the importance of symbolic signification in social life.

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