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Theoretical and Practical Aspects of a Magic Text's Being

ABSTRACT

A theoretical and practical aspect of magic text detection determines the possibility of correlation between philosophy, religion, and magic.

An analysis of Holy Vedic texts has been represented in the paper and the main concepts of Ghaudia-Vaishnavism as well. In the latter, magic develops by means of a higher cause of consciousness purification (function of religion) via a conscious understanding of the entire higher source (function of philosophy).

The unity of magic, religion, and philosophy is observed in Western-European alchemical and astrological texts deprived of any pragmatic purposes, on the one hand, and harmonically synthesised in all levels of human being on the basis of their corporality on the other hand. The idea of collective unconsciousness archetype by K.G. Jung, historical research in astrology and alchemy by D. Radyar, hermeneutical method of holy text interpretation by H.P. Blavatsky and the methodology of "concrete metaphysics" by Fr. Paul Florenskiy find their use in philosophical world outlook as an experience of researching magic texts'.

The conclusion of this research is the next: the main function and higher predestination of a magic text is to connect the terrestrial and celestial as a condition for consciousness widening towards divine meanings; a magic text accomplishes its function when it organically interacts on religious and philosophical levels; the deepest grounding for the unity of these levels is an energy of external (corporeal) and internal (astral-psychic) aspects of human nature that inseparably connected to the energies of Universe.

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Both verbal and non-verbal forms of representation are thought to be magic texts. This wide understanding of the term ‘text’ is based upon the tradition of philosophical hermeneutics. That gives an opportunity to reconstruct a magic text on the level of phenomena in more adequate way. They are formed in the way of phenomenological reduction that “factors out” a verbal component.

The being of a magic text evolves through two aspects.

The theoretical one represents a conceptual frame of main semantic units and discloses in reflexive-mental forms the content of a magic act. Its content finds an expression by means of connected linear-logical images, symbols, concepts and represents the concept of a metaphysical picture of the world.

The content given is a component of the common world view paradigm, represented in the forms of philosophy and theology.

The practical aspect of a magic text is constituted by means of an integral act on all levels of man’s and Absolute’s being. The connection between them has a non-linear character and happens on a psycho-somatic level that, in turn, is activated during the magic act. In this case, corporeal-sensory integrity plays its role, rather than the mental content of the image and symbol (as in the theoretical aspect).

The character and functions of the theoretical aspect are distinguished on the basis of definition in verbal-descriptive form, or owing to the direct incorporation of it in the structure of the magic act. The content of the latter is constituted by means of the cumulative synthetic unity of every level of a human’s being.

Division of theology and theurgy is based upon an opposition of theoretical and practical aspects of the magical text. Indeed they both are inalienable components of a sacral act of communication with the Absolute.

The identification of the theoretical and practical aspects of a magic text stipulates the possibility to define a relation between philosophy, religion, and magic.

Thus, *magic aspects*, as a mantra’s symbolism relating to a word’s impact on changing the consciousness, have their reflection in Holy Vedic Scripture; *religious ones* that show the way to the purification of the consciousness, and *philosophical* as a universal conception of their core content. One can reveal these three levels, reflecting on Upanishads, as a degree of grasping

of Brahman. Magic, religious, and philosophical levels are represented in the text synchronically, not sequentially. This approach reflects strictly Eastern (Indian) features of world-view.

Dialogue is a peculiarity of Upanishads, in which the teacher gives a pupil several answers on the one question offering, thus, an entire vision of the higher cause (Brahman as a source of stamina); the ways of their expanding to pure, unconditioned consciousness (Brahman as an immortal commencement); the universals of its understanding (Brahman as an absolute, universal commencement). Magic, religion, and philosophy are represented here in their inseparable unity. If there is no religious or philosophical aspect, magic turns to its demonic character. That is why magic in its true assignment comes true by means of a higher cause of purification of consciousness through a conscious understanding of the core of higher origin. Thus, magic develops itself through the unity of corpora, speech, and intellect. They cannot be reduced to one another, though they are necessary aspects of the ritual which provides a synchrony of all three levels represented in Upanishads as a Brahman conception. Speech at the same time works as a link between terrestrial (body) and celestial (intellect) worlds and it is compared to Agni (messenger of God) in Rigveda. "Let the speech, as a messenger, wanders between two worlds" (RV 173,3,4).¹

In this way the speech acts as an ontological reality. There is a key to understanding entire magic texts which contain in themselves attributes of the celestial and terrestrial.

So, the practice of the sacral word evolves in its fullness their function by means of: speech unity (magic symbol of the word); understanding (philosophical); emotion (religious); and their expression by means of the verbal impact on consciousness.

However, magic, in its true predestination, evolves through the higher cause of purification of consciousness (function of religion) in the way of deliberate understanding of the entity of higher principles (function of philosophy).

This feature of magic becomes most evidently apparent in alchemic and astrological texts to the extent that, on the one hand, it is deprived of pragmatic sets and, on the other hand, it synthesised all levels of a human's being on the basis of corporality in a harmonic way.

So, the process of Great Work (Magnum Opus) in alchemy and astrology is completed via three aspects. Firstly, it is based upon world outlook mindsets defined in the "Emerald Tablet": "In order to realise all miracles in one thing, that which situated below is conformed to that which situated above; and that

¹ *Ригведа. Мандалы*, т: I, пер. Т. Я. Елизаренкова, Москва 1989–1999.

which situated above is conformed to which situated below.”² Secondly, it is the totality of the practical actions of an alchemist and astrologist, when they operate by external things – by matter (metals) and special tools (retort, atanor etc.). It is the observation of the stars in astrology and the computation of their movement. Thirdly, the process of Great Work achieves its wholeness and completeness when it is induced by the alchemist’s and astrologist’s corporality. As a result, a corporeal-energetic effect, as a peculiar phenomenological form of reflection on the follower of spirituality’s own actions is taking shape. The last aspect, as a matter of fact, is a magic component of Great Work. This is exactly the difference between magic and chemistry, and alchemy where only the first two aspects take place. An alchemist and astrologist carry out a mystery of internal self-transformation by means of the act of magic. The basis of that is an identification of elements of spiritual-corporeal organisation of the follower of spirituality with metals, planets and other objects of their actions. Metals, in their turn, become similar to elements in a universe scale and to planet characters. The mimetic nature of alchemical and astrological magism, on the one hand, ascending to magic totemic beliefs, on the other hand, is a basis for the formation of philosophical and religious levels.

In relation to the Sun and Moon, and later, probably, to the brightest stars, man experiences some dim identity. He feels them as a living creatures, aspires to the widest unity with them. He longs for being filled with their entity — this star worship (or, rather, identification themselves with the stars), corresponds to totem culture.³

Identification with the thing, mirroring it, is the historically primordial, initial form of magic contact setting with the thing and it can be achieved by means of the projection of psychic characteristic of humans onto the thing.

Whenever the researcher’s mind moves away from exact observation of the facts that are before him, and goes his own way, the unconscious spiritus rector (spirit that directs) has the upper hand and returns this mind backward to permanently grounded archetypes which due to this regression are projected by force.⁴

² *Гермес Трисмегист и герметическая традиция Востока и Запада*, отв. ред. Б. С. Попов, [сост., коммент. и пер. с древнегреч., лат., фр., нем., англ., польск. К. Богуцкий], Киев–Москва 1998, p. 314.

³ Д. Радьяр, *Астрология личности. Представление астрологических понятий и идей в свете современной психологии и философии*, ред. А. Дегтярев, [пер. с англ. М. Папуш], Москва 1991, p. 14.

⁴ К. Г. Юнг, *Психология переноса. Статьи. Сборник*, ответ. ред. С. Л. Удовик, [пер. с англ. М. А. Собоуцкий, Е. Б. Глушак], серия: „Актуальная психология”, Москва–Киев 1997, p. 151.

D. Radyar tries to define the sacrament of the magic act as a unity and deep connection of alchemist and astrologist to externally-objective processes: “The most important was not a celestial bodies’ movement – but the specific life quality which each celestial body has. This particular quality, peculiar property of the star, deity, evolves, to the point, from the star’s light.”⁵ It is achieved an ontological identity of micro and macrocosm *eo ipso* on the level of corporeal-energetic effect. This conditions the peculiarities of the practical character of the magic act in alchemy and in astrology.

Alchemy does not try to abandon the nature and focus consciousness out of it, so to speak, on the high peaks of the soul. And it does not try to have a control over it forcibly by means of intellectualised will. It accepts universal life substance that penetrates all the Universe, both physical and spiritual. A man and the universe are represented by two embodiments of one and the same harmony of principles, acting in that life substance.⁶

The secret of the magic act is based upon the ability to restrain the mentioned “life substance” in its initial subject-object integrity. The feature which is constituted during this process has a special quality. Its nature is defined by corporeal transformation on the psychosomatic level where the phenomenon of subjectivity is constituted on the ontological surface. The definition of the content of such “life substance” is defined as specified law (theoretical aspect) and it constitutes deep identity of micro and macrocosm - the inner state of man’s being in unity with the universe. This unity, the form of which is a projection, constitutes the practice of magic act. It is a long-term task for contemporary philosophical-anthropological reflection and psychology to define the nature of projection in that part, which is carried out on a psycho-somatic, non-conscious level in the process of imitating act. It is not only theory, but also practice of religious, philosophical, and magic levels unity are synthesised in contemporary culture.

An example of the practice of the unity of religious, philosophical, and magic levels can be the tradition of Ghaudia-Vaishnavism, which is the latest independent school of theistic Vedanta. In Shri-Chaitanya studies of Ghaudia-Vaishnavism, formed in the 16th century, Krishna is presented in three hypostasis’ at a time: one, undivided, impersonal energy as a spiritual substance and the essence of the universe (Brahman); pervasive, ubiquitous, and omniscient Spirit (Paramatma); supreme person of God as an Absolute (Svayam-Bhagavan). This

⁵ Д. Радьяр, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 27–28.

kind of interpretation of Krishna's entity brings productive ideas of transcendental-immanent synthesis to a theological area, which helps to overcome an ontological dualism of substance and its attributes.

A fundamental concept of Ghaudia-Vaishnavism on transcendental-inherent Krishna's nature in a view of undivided impersonal energy and pervasive Spirit became a basis for "Unconceivable-One'n'Plural Being Studies" formation according to which, as Shri-Chaitania interpreted it, "The Almighty and jivas are inconceivably are one and differentiated from each other." The doctrine formulated by him on unconceivable one and plural entity (Achintya-bheda-abheda-tattva-vada), shapes the updated concept of the universal monism that widens the boundaries of anthropological possibilities of self-knowledge and spiritual development. So, the Gaudiya-Vaishnavism studies, that have been represented in *Bhagavad-Ghita* and other holy texts, contain in itself a religious aspect (worship to Krishna), a philosophical one (metaphysic conception of unconceivable oneness-separateness), and a magical aspect at a time achieved via multiple mahamantra reiteration and japa-meditation.

The nature and deepest fundament of the oneness of three aspects were analyzed by H. P. Blavatsky, the founder of theosophy in the 20th century. Continuing and developing the traditions of Hermetism, she considers the threefold character of the unity of Human and Nature:

Nature is threefold: there is visible, objective nature; invisible, intrinsic nature that gives an energy and the model of the first one and its vital principle; the *Spirit* is above these two, the source of all forces, the one which is eternal and indestructible. The two lower types are perpetually changing; the third, highest one, is unchangeable. Man is *threefold as well*: s/he has objective, physical body; s/he has an astral body (or soul) that revives, it is an actual man; and above these two hovers and lights up the third one – the overlord, immortal spirit. When actual man manages to merge into the last it becomes an immortal entity.⁷

The researcher reveals a deep connection between external (objective objectification, a human's physical body) and intrinsic (energy of natural phenomena with the astral body (that revives) of a human) factors on the basis of a single spirit for them.

Studying the magic character of the word, a Russian religious philosopher of the 20th century, Fr. Paul Florenskiy, highlights the role of energy that is produced during the magic act of the cumulative activity of all bodily organs of a human being:

⁷ Е. П. Блаватская, *Разоблаченная Изида. Ключ к тайнам древней и современной науки и теософии*, т. 2: *Теология*, [пер. с англ. К. Леонова, О. Колесникова], Москва 2001, p. 736.

Magic action of a known extent will not happen unless the energy even of great amount will not be organised in a definite way that leads its level to a *known altitude*. And then it will easily and readily flow onto those field in need of it and by the nature of things it will— cultivate *magic pastures*.⁸

So, we can conclude the next:

1. The main function and highest destination of a magic text is to connect terrestrial and celestial as conditions for the expanding of the consciousness to a divine point.
2. A magic text fits its purpose only if it organically interacts with religious and philosophical levels. Emasculating of comprehension and religious feelings converts it into demonic practice otherwise, conditioned by one-sided corporeal motivation.
3. The deepest ground for the unity of these levels is energy of external (corporeal) and internal (astral-psychic) aspects of the human nature connected to the energies of the Universe.

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⁸ Священник П. Флоренский, *Сочинения в четырех томах*, т. 3 (1): *У водоразделов мысли*, Москва 1999, р. 241.

