CONCLUSION
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From the present study it becomes clear that in the ancient times during the Vedic period, the AV occult rites enjoyed mass popularity. The extent of popularity was so vast that, other contemporary Vedas and subsequently the Brāhmaṇas and the Grhya-sūtras were considerably influenced by the AV occultism.

It is also seen that the Atharvanic occult-rites were widely practised in the age of Purāṇas and Rāmāyaṇa - Mahābhārata. It is however probable that in course of time the maleficent rites of the AV have undergone development and diversification in form of Tāntrika rites, and the healing rites of the AV have gradually developed and emerged as an entirely subsidiary Veda, named as the Āyurveda.

Material science has explained many occult phenomena, hitherto believed to be supernatural; none-the-less, many occult practices are still performed in various regions in India publicly or privately. Worship of 'Śitalā' (to prevent small-pox), 'Olābibī' (as a counter-measure to Cholera), 'Āteśwar' and 'Jwarāsura' (for cure and prevention of fevers), 'Pānchutṭhākur' (to prevent premature and un-natural death of children), 'Ghaṭṭārṇa' (to prevent skin diseases), demonical spirits like 'Raṅkini, Vāsālī, Cāndī' (for prosperity), 'Tūṣu festival' (for abundant crops) in Bengal, worship of 'Bāreyā' (to remove obstacles), 'Raṅkini, Bārām, Bīndā' festival (for abundance of crops), 'Dheilābābā' (for Welfare and
protection from wild animals) among Birhora, Mundā and Sāntāls of Bihar(1). Worship of Bisālākṣī, Jvaranārayana in Orissa; worship of Bābādeo(2) among Bhilas in Gjirot; worship of Tiruvayava, Pānga-nadiśvara, Māridiyāmmā, Kuttanadāvara (for curing of diseases) and Kāniyāmmā (for a good haul of fish) in South India(3) etc. are still prevalent. The existence of priesthood, horde of fortune-tellers, large-scale attraction of Jāgrata-devatās and of wearing amulets, (Māduli-Kavacha) and divine medicine still have their own importance and place in the Indian way of life.

All these rites and rituals, worship of folk-gods and goddesses, are undoubtedly inheritances of the past. If we trek back with searching mind, we are likely to find that the source or stimulus of all these performances is the Atharvan spirit. Time-gap of hundreds of centuries, space-gap of hundreds of miles between different regions, rise of Buddhism, Tantrāism, Jaiśism, Islamic religion and various other cultural influences are the undeniable factors that must have however affected and changed the ancient traditional forms.

(1) Basu, G.K., Banglar Laukika Devata, Chaps. 2, 4, 7, 12, 13, 15, 23, 24 & 33.
(2) Baba Deo, Bhil.God, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. III, p.310
(3) Whitehead, Village gods of South India, pp.26,30,65 & 121
The occult sphere has its poseurs and fakes. There is a large crowd of pseudosādhus, faquirs and yogīs who exploit the gullibility and blind faith of the credulous public for an easy living. Real occultists are rare: they seldom demonstrate their occult powers and prefer to keep it within themselves.

Occult practices, however, should not be confused with magical performances like rope-tricks, vanishing tricks etc. As already stated, these are not occult but are purely illusory practices and trickery of hands. Though such performances contain chanting of hymns, these are in fact merely mumbo-jumbos to add entertainment to magical shows. AV 'Mantras' do not show any indication or knowledge of such illusory practices and cannot be the source of magical performances.

Comprehensive or critical study has not yet been made to understand the occult mysteries. Vaitāna and Kausīka have supplied us some valuable informations about applications on AV Mantras, but the mysteries behind the rituals still remain unexplained; hence there is ample scope for critical study in this practically unexplored field, which is based on thousands of years of knowledge, experience and popular practice.