INTRODUCTION
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Occultism is a belief in the existence of super-natural spirits and possibility of human control over them. It also includes the notion that these spirits act and react on human behaviour to a great extent.

From the earliest days of history, man admires and fears the strange things that happen around him, the secrets of which he cannot fathom.

The occultists claim that there is a higher level of consciousness, which can be made extra-ordinarily efficient by rigid mental training and exercising power of concentration. Thus,
they develop what we call occult power, by application of which they can control the so-called super-natural spirits.

Occultism is, as if a kind of twilight zone, where the limited sense-faculties or the known rational laws do not necessarily always work.

The Science of para-psychology has in modern times made attempts to explore Occult mysteries, but it is still groping in the dark.

(1) Para-psychological studies were undertaken by different institutions. The para-psychological laboratory at Duke University built societies for psychical research. S.B. Rhine, Director, Para-psychological Laboratory, Duke University, conducted experiments on extra-sensory perception (ESP) by various techniques.

Dr. R. Scheidner and G. Murphy at Harvard University made detailed experiments on clairvoyance. The test demonstrates the capacity of individuals to have super-natural knowledge of events, scenes and other informations. Experiments and tests were also carried out with success on telepathy and precognition. The American society for psychical research in New York and few Universities (Harvard and Groningen-Holland) instituted sufficient enquiry on the subject and obtained positive results. At Duke University, the tests demonstrated that telepathy and clairvoyance were functions of E.S.P. which is independent of all
There are many unexplored depths, strange things which are inexplicable, but which none-the-less exist. Many strange things bordering on the super-natural have been recorded, which are not mere gossips, hearsays or fake propagandas.

The anecdote of the Fakir, buried by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in a vault at Lahore is one such known instance, mentioned in the historical record. Paul Brunton, the well-known Western traveller, during his travel in India, among the mystics and Yogis, in quest of truth, records - 'I, since verified this reference and find that the actual episode, occurred in 1837 at Lahore. The Fakir was buried in the presence of King Ranjit Singh, Sir Claude Wade, Dr. Honigberger and others. A guard of Sikh soldiers watched the grave day and night to prevent fraud. The Fakir was dug up alive forty days later. Fuller particularities can be found in the archives at Calcutta. His name was Haridas.'

space-time laws.

In 1943 Para-psychological laboratory at Duke University announced the existence of psychokinesis which is a parapsychical process or the exercise of direct mental influence over a physical object or objective process. It also demonstrated the psycho-kinetic (PK) effect.


We may mention in this connection, a very recent event as reported in the Anandabazar Patrika dated 26th June, '73(3), which partakes of some characteristics of occultism.

All the world over, since the days of early civilization, India is famed as the land of mysteries and mystics. No wonder that foreign travellers, truth-seekers and adventurers, who visited India, were often attracted by the mysteries of the land and carried back with them many tales of amazing supernatural practices and phenomena.

In fact, occultism had been and even to-day, to an extent, is an indissoluble part of Indian culture and heritage. Study of occultism.

(3) On the 23rd June, '73 Sree Goura Chandra Naskar of village Padmajala, 24 Parganas was bitten by a deadly country-Cobra. He was admitted in the Nilratan Sarkar Govt. Hospital, Calcutta and was under immediate treatment of Dr. D.K. Roy. In spite of all the modern treatment, doctors gave up hope. The patient was about to die, when his relatives brought Sree Jagannath Misra Chaurasia of Sealdah, a Gunin-healer of Snake-bites by Occult method. The Gunin, blew breath on the patient's mouth with some muttered and poured 150 mugs of water on the patient's head. The dying patient soon recovered to the bewilderment of the attending physicians.
occultism cannot therefore be neglected, if we want to understand the Indian civilization and culture in their entirety. That is why I propose to carry on this investigation on the Atharvavedic occultism, as an aspect of Indian culture.

The Atharva-Veda is generally acknowledged to be the ancient book of Indian occultism and the fountain source of occult-practices in India. In the Atharva-veda, we find occult prescriptions for attainment of all kinds of material benefits like riches, Children, prosperity, good health, long life, curing of various diseases, thwarting evils, destruction of enemies, success in disputes, winning over certain persons, victory in war, killing of worms, successful agriculture, bringing forth rains etc., for all kinds of people, ranging from the king, right down to the poorest peasant.

(4) AV.i.15.iii.5.iii.31.  (13) AV.iii.25.vi.8. vi.i.102.
(5) AV.VI.11; VI.81.V.25  (14) AV.vi.97-98 vii.8.xi.9-10.
(6) AV. iii.5  (15) AV.ii.31.v.22
(7) AV. viii.53.  (16) AV.iii.17
(8) AV.i.35. ii.28. iii.11. V.30 (17) AV.iv.15.vii.18
(9) AV.i.23. i.24. ii.8.ii.33.iv.13
(10) AV. i.18. 1.27. i.28.iv.17-18.v.31
(11) AV.ii.19-23.iii.6.iv.19.vi.6;vi.103
The Atharva-vedic occultism to a great extent directly or indirectly influenced the other vedic rituals and also Brähmanical and Gṛhya rites. In the succeeding ages also, the influence of the Atharvanic occultism is discernible, though mixed up with so-called Tantric, Yogic and the Ayurvedic rites and rituals.

A scholastic study of occultism, was first made by Peter Abelard (1079-1142) and Hégo of St. Victor (1096-1141) (18). Abelard recognised the influence of stars and demons on men and occult properties in some plants, seeds and stones by which marvels could be worked. Since then a number of Western Scholars like Sir John Frazer, A. Lang, Jevons, E. Tylor, L. Thorndike, A. Lyall and many others made extensive probings and study of various occult practices in different parts of the world during different periods. Their study is a systematic chronicle of occult practices, spread over the world, of which India is an important area. Some eminent German scholars like Hillebrandt, Caland, Weber etc., made extensive study on Vedic rites, in the context of which, they threw some light on Vedic occultism, as a matter of incidence. Their references and study, however pioneer it may be, is more or less fragmentary. To my knowledge and belief, there has not been so far made a comprehensive study

of Atharva-Vedic occultism, its relation with
the other Vedas, its influence on the rituals of the later
periods, the Indian masses through ages and its influence
in the neighbouring territories.

Some Indian scholars, like Shende, Karambelkar, have
however made a critical study on the Atharva-veda, but they
deal mainly with philosophy, medicine and some broad aspects
of Atharva-vedic culture and civilisation.

Occultism is not only of a pandemic nature but is as old
as the human civilization. The detailed study of the occultism
in the Atharva-veda in every respect - historical, geographical,
social, socio-pathological, ethical, anthropological, cultural,
and from the points of evolution etc. is so vast, that study
in any of these spheres is a subject of separate research and
investigation involving sustained international study in fields
and in libraries in different countries. My present study is
therefore of a limited scope, in which endeavours have been made
to explain the nature of occultism on the basis of the AV
(Atharvavedic) hymns; to show the difference of occultism from
science, religion and magical performances; to classify the AV
incantations from different stand points; to bring out how far
the AV occultism relates to the other vedic occult rites; to
show the influence of AV occultism on the Brähmanas and the
Gṛhya-sūtras and relation of AV occultism with the occult prac-
tices of other countries and also to find out to what extent the
Purānic, Tāntric, Yogic and Āyurvedic occult practices are
indebted to Atharva-vedic occultism.
For correct interpretation of the Atharva-vedic hymns, I had to depend largely on Śāyāna's commentary which is accepted as an authority. In cases, when Śāyāna's interpretation is not available, interpretations by Whitney and Bloomfield have been consulted. For consistent and correct assessment of the Atharva-Vedic rituals, the traditional Vaitāna and Kauśika-Sūtras have been taken as the guiding stars.

I have tried to pursue the study with dispassionate attitude as far as possible and without any bias. As a student of cultural history, I have approached the subject critically with sympathy and understanding.

However spectacular the scientific advancements may be, our knowledge of the Nature's law is still incomplete. It can be expected that when the advanced guard of scientists will push forward into unexplored territories, they will find out a few more of these laws, with the help of which, we shall be able to explain such phenomena which are to-day tantamount to miracles.

In the recent times, a shift in interests of many students from the real to supernaturals is notably visible. Many U.S. Universities and Schools e.g. Wisconsin, Oakland, California Universities are now offering a wide variety of occult subjects for serious study. This may, in near future, cast new light on...
in the matter of appreciating the true perspective of the practices of Atharva-vedic occultism.

We can perhaps cherish the hope that in course of time, science and occultism may join hands together to unfold a new horizon of knowledge. Let us look forward with this cheering hope. This is our fond vision.