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**The phenomenon of worldview in diagnostic  
systems of religious medicine: the specifics  
of the causality of healings (philosophical analysis)**

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**Abstract**

This work, from the point of view of its own self-reflection, religious medicine and its various empirical forms, as well as methods of treatment of a worldview character in relation to psychoanalysis and modernity, are analyzed. In these forms, ethical reflection and medical worldview are determined by spirituality, which acts as their receptor. The human worldview constitutes the "*supporting continuum*" of sacred and religious directions of medicine and

represents the initial object of research. The activity of the worldview on religion tradition is considered in the aspect of neurophysiological grounds for explaining the mechanism of understanding, reduced to a sign-symbolic process. As a socially organized form of social consciousness, religion affects a person's worldview through sacred meanings, in which his freedom, inner world, and moral responsibility are rooted. At this context Christian medicine is presented as a type of religious medicine, existing as many varieties of a confessional nature. The therapeutic function here is performed by *the liturgy* of ritual texts, which are methodologically determined by hermeneutics. The cognitive and semantic system "*worldview - disease - therapeutic procedure - cure*" is investigated as a self-sustaining construction - the "*therapeutic circle*," the action of which is obviously manifested in psychotherapeutic measures.

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**Keywords**

Worldview, religious medicine, spiritual values, pastoral medicine, liturgics, verbal impact, symbolism, therapeutic methods, self-reflection, therapeutic circle, newworldview, tradition.

**Introduction**

The nature, essence, content and origin of human self-awareness for scientific thinking is a single object for further study. The phenomenal essence of a person is hidden from direct sensory experience and experimental research, and therefore requires a special methodological approach in which the methods of everyday, scientific and religious reflection intersect. The content of the religious sphere, the forms of its interaction with philosophy, occurring through the self-reflection of the personality [Luke (Voino-Yasenetsky), 2016, p. 162-164], are diverse. The study of the phenomenon of religious medicine in the categories of philosophy and the parallel solution of the problem of the effect of the spiritual on the bodily was solved simultaneously at two levels: scientific and non-scientific [Stankevich, 2002, p. 4]. In this regard, it is important to study the internal system of conditions for the interaction of spiritual and bodily as a process of mutual influence of the ideal and material principles in human nature. In the diagnostic systems of religious medicine, it is these relationships that determine the specifics of the causality of healings.

**Content**

A religious worldview is a special way of perceiving, explaining and knowing the world on the basis of a socially organized person's faith in God, worship of divine forces and veneration of the highest spiritual values embodied in God. As a tool and method of treatment, the religious worldview is used in theurgic pastoral medicine. Theurgic medicine is associated with the concept of "theurgy." Translated from Greek, it means divine action. As a special form of mythology, it has existed since the Hellenistic-Roman period along with such forms of social consciousness as religion and art [Petrov, 2003]. The formation of theurgy in ancient Greece, in Egypt during the development of mankind, occurs during the domination of mythological consciousness in society. Myth is a way of treating the

world for all mankind until groups of people begin to stand out in society, whose mythological consciousness begins to transform, acquiring new features and differences.

Theurgic consciousness is the most developed and distinct manifestation of the archetypal principle of personality, in contrast to the publicly available myth and mythical consciousness that can be transmitted to anyone. Theurgic knowledge acts as a secret, a symbolic explanation of the highest foundations of being, which is known only through sacred-mystical initiation and rituals. The idea of the universe in theurgic consciousness is reduced to the perception of reality through a symbol. The transmission of information and the knowledge of being in theurgy also occurs with the help of symbols and mysteries - a special way of mastering the sacred time and space. As an art form based on faith and knowledge, theurgy influences a person's worldview through special events.

Pastoral theurgic medicine proceeds from general Christian ideas about diseases. Bodily diseases in most cases are understood as a form of divine mercy aimed at overcoming and atoning of sins. Restoring the three-part integrity of human nature - spirit, soul, body - the main task of treatment [Luke (Voino-Yasenetsky), 2016, p. 620-622, 641-642]. The idea of the relationship of disease with sin and its divine origin is clearly expressed in the books of the Old and New Testaments. Pastoral medicine is a system for regulating human life in all its biological manifestations, from physiological to illness and death. Pastoral in medicine refers to religious assistance, the sum of spiritual and administrative instructions; this includes theological, philosophical and ethical views, forms and rules, and methods and ways, by means of which doctors, priests and believers carry out treatment in the process of fulfilling their religious duty [Slesarev, 1998, p. 75]. The Christian religion, claiming that a person's aims are contained in God, radically changed its worldview. Having created her own ideal of a moral personality, different from the ideal of antiquity, it established completely different values and set the vector of the development of mankind [Kagarmanova, 2016, p. 54].

The literature on religious medicine is quite extensive. The actually description of only certain forms of religious medicine is relevant, concentrating the typical manifestations of the influence of a religious worldview and ritual as methods of treating diseases. The closest form of religious medicine to us is Christian medicine. Like Christianity in general, Christian medicine has gone a long way of historical development and has many varieties of historical and confessional character. The most developed and fully described, from the point of view of its self-reflection, is the pastoral, theurgic medicine of the Catholic Church.

Pastoral medicine proceeds from general Christian ideas about diseases. Bodily diseases are in most cases a form of divine mercy aimed at overcoming sin and its redemption. Mental illness is a form of mediated (by the forces of the devil) punishment, blocking the very path to salvation through repentance [Gavalier, 1973, p. 343-352]. The idea that illness is related to sin and has a divine origin ("I kill and revive, I strike and I heal, and no one will deliver from my hand" [Deuteronomy, 32; 39]) is clearly expressed in the books of the Old and New Testaments and runs like a red thread through all subsequent theological literature, including modern [Ryabushkin, 1970, p. 102, 103]. The Christian physician always adheres to the principles of Christian anthropology [Burgaf, 2004], which are implicitly contained in the New Testament and the understanding of personality as depth irreducible to nature. In this depth of a man, his freedom, inner peace, moral responsibility and religious life are rooted.

In religious doctrine, the systemic basis is hermeneutics, which defines and interprets the meaning, liturgy of the text in relation to the Bible as sensual-literal, abstract-moralizing and ideally mystical. The first fundamental work concerning hermeneutics in its therapeutic sense was created by the great Christian thinker in 426. Aurelius Augustine [Augustine of Hippo, 2006]. Augustine defined the fundamental hermeneutic category of "understanding," sign as the symbol, and its place in the context

of events taking place. "As a mean to healing is healing, so the incarnation of the Word is a mean of healing undertaken to heal and restore sinners" [ibid.], wrote Augustine.

Differences in the methodological significance of the disease in sacred and developed religious ideas were perfectly noted by F. Nietzsche [Nietzsche, 1995, p. 329]: "The first step: a person sees in each disease something for which he must take revenge on someone else, while he feels strength in himself, and this comforts him. The second step: a person sees in each disease punishment, that is, cleansing from sin and a mean of release... "

Pastoral medicine is a system of regulation of human life in all its biological manifestations, starting with physiological (birth and upbringing of a child, sexual life, marriage, pregnancy, etc.) and ending with illness and death [Gavalier, 1973, p. 346]. Pastoral in medicine refers to religious assistance, the sum of spiritual and administrative instructions; this includes theological, philosophical and ethical views, forms and rules, and the methods and ways in which doctors, priests and believers administer treatment in the process of performing their religious duty [Ibid. P. 346].

The process of preserving health and treatment consists of a number of groups of measures: 1) posts and other elements of regulatory effects on the body; 2) general adherence to the prescribed elements of the doctrine, i.e., religious lifestyle; 3) liturgical events that contribute to recovery. J. Sprenger and G. Institoris [Schweitzer, 1973, p. 259] they speak of five permitted means of healing: 1) pilgrimages to holy places; 2) confession; 3) prayers; 4) exorcism; 5) vows. Among the liturgical elements of treatment are the sacraments of consolation of the sick, absolution, individual and group prayers and services ("Is any of you sick, let him call the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him" [James 5:14]).

A special place belongs to the phenomenon of "miraculous healings" and the organization of "medical cults" based on them, the most famous of which are located in the temples of Lourdes, Fatima, the Mariana Sanctuary (Notre Dame du Dap), etc. The theological and everyday doctrines of the "miracle of healing" have been developed in sufficient detail. There are such varieties as the miracle "beyond nature" (resurrection from the dead), "miracle against nature" (not desecrating the body with fire), "miracle through nature" (immediate healing of wounds) and "miracle within nature" (cure of mental and somatic diseases) [Gavalier, 1973, p. 349]. The existence of numerous reliable facts of healing of believers under the influence of religious inspiration and ritual actions is recognized in the Soviet period of Russian science [Ryabushkin, 1970, p. 145]. V. M. Bekhterev [Bekhterev, 1903, p. 30, 31], who studied this phenomenon, wrote: "Faith is fertile ground for self-healing, it often performs miraculous healings this way where ordinary suggestion turns out to be powerless. These healings most often take place in temples, in front of "miraculous icons," at the sight of the very face behind which rumor has strengthened the glory of holiness." Medical cults were also common in Russia. "Unworthy churches" at the monasteries existed in Kyiv-Pechersky and Pereyaslavsky, Kirillo-Belozersky, Chudov, etc. Since the XIX century. there were also special courtyards where patients, blind and lepers were collected and treated (the first civil hospital in Russia was built in Veliky Novgorod only in 1417 [Kuzmin, 1973, p. 35]). Miraculous healing of patients with the help of spiritual-Christian means [Life of Elder Seraphim, 1863, c. 127-131; 14] by holy old ascetics in Russia went down in history as a feat of self-overcoming in the name of higher values.

Asceticism is understood as the achievement of "religious and moral perfection," which "has the direct and immediate aim of adapting the natural forces and abilities of a person to perceive the influence of Divine grace, making them an organ, obedient and convenient instrument for achieving and realizing eternal life in a human person" [Zarin, 1907, p. 11-12].

The value component [Pesotskaya, 1996] of the worldview plays a key regulatory role in the sequence of this adaptation.

Thus, the worldview constitutes the "supporting continuum" of sacred and religious areas of medicine. Each specific method of treating these areas of medicine directly comes from the worldview as a whole and its individual positions. The worldview of the personality is the psychophysiological segment of the body that constructs value thinking. Components of the worldview, acting as supporting elements of therapeutic methods, have a metaphysical character. A slight rethinking of the interpretation is permissible, but not the worldview in the aspect of Truth, which in religion and religious medicine is in God.

All elements of the worldview that act as the supporting structures of therapeutic methods (attitude, worldview, worldview, values) are simple in cognitive and semantic terms. The more archaic the direction of medicine, the more intensively and less indirectly it uses the physiological activity of the worldview. In the aspect of neurophysiological grounds for explaining the mechanism of understanding, the process is reduced to sign-symbolic coding in neurons and proceeds in such a way that the perceived object activates a certain group of cells - the "neural ensemble," each element of which is responsible for certain information and at the same time can belong to other ensembles. That is, specific neural groups are activated on certain signs in the human brain. N. Bekhtereva showed that the patterns of the current frequency of discharges of neurons of some brain structures in the perception of verbal (verbal) stimuli are able to reflect the acoustic and general semantic characteristics of words.

Treatment is more effective if it unfolds on the basis of the "natural" worldview of the patient, but it is also possible on the basis of the "neo-world vision" formulated by the doctor during the treatment. Treatment based on neo-world vision requires greater "authoritarianism" of therapeutic impact and therefore places greater demands on the personality and qualifications of the doctor. "Mass" treatment can only be carried out on the basis of "standard" worldviews. The patient's awareness of the nature of the inscriptions of specific treatment methods in the worldview increases the effectiveness of treatment. The success of treatment is one of the components of the worldview verification process. Cognitive construction with low therapeutic potential is not able to turn into a full-fledged "mass" worldview.

Thus, the "worldview - disease - therapeutic procedure - cure" system constitutes a self-sustaining system - the "therapeutic circle." The "unwinding" of this circle, most obviously manifested in psychotherapeutic measures, provides an "avalanche" increase in the therapeutic effect.

## Conclusion

Reflex activity in a man is both physiological and mental activity [Stankevich, 2002, p. 21], which expresses the interaction of spiritual and bodily principles. The categories of soul and body, historically elevated to the rank of philosophical, express only the phenomenology of events lying on the surface of introspection. The effect of the soul on the body is factual certainty, in which the internal causation remained unclear. A detailed analysis reveals the causality between spiritual and bodily, based on the mechanisms of transmitting information through a word as a universal and information-intensive conditional signal "[Ibid. S. 20; 12]. The functional role of the worldview as the backbone of the response algorithm and its influence on the physiological mechanisms of self-regulation is obvious [Ibid.]. The realization of the analytical function of the worldview in relation to the contradictory interacting cognitive aspects of medical theories and methodologies with various sources of genesis occurs through philosophy.

The process of development of medical methodology, which has been taking place for a long time against the background of ideological differentiation of schools of medicine, can only be carried out through innovation, removing the numerous "old" in a single "new." The process of reflective-communicative relations between a doctor and a patient is realized, as a rule, in the structure of a

specific diagnostic system, in which pragmatic and semantic characteristics of information are able to determine the therapeutic effect. In the therapy of any disease, a key role is played by the belief in the success of healing, starting from the stage of diagnosis. At all stages of treatment, the patient's belief in the success of treatment provides completely new results. Faith plays a major role in the practice of a doctor.

The language structure is the core of the essential features of a person, and the internal system of conditions connects symbolic forms (spiritual meaning) and psychophysical organization (to the deep layers of the unconscious), instinctive as an aspect of the ontological basis [Pesotskaya, 2017]. For this reason, the peculiarities of verbal exposure in therapy and in medicine in general, the ability of a word to modulate physiological indicators of a person is extremely important and effective. The periodic shift of dominant paradigms in medicine, in turn, is understood as a prerequisite for the ability to actualize the effectiveness of verbal influences. The totality of various areas of medicine is understood as a single methane direction of medicine, which is formed by the humanities with their own tradition.

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## **Феномен мировоззрения в диагностических системах религиозной медицины: специфика причинности исцелений (философский анализ)**

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### Аннотация

В настоящей работе с точки зрения собственной саморефлексии анализируется религиозная медицина и различные её эмпирические формы, а также методы лечения мировоззренческого характера в отношении к психоанализу и современности. В данных формах этическую рефлексию и врачебное мировоззрение определяет духовность, выступающая их рецептором. Мировоззрение человека составляет «опорный континуум» сакральных и религиозных направлений медицины и выступает исходным объектом исследования. Активность мировоззрения в диагностических системах религиозной традиции рассмотрена в аспекте нейрофизиологических оснований объяснения механизма понимания, сводимого к знаково-символическому процессу. Как социально организованная форма общественного сознания религия влияет на мировоззрение человека посредством сакральных смыслов, в которых укоренены его свобода, внутренний мир, моральная ответственность. В данном контексте христианская медицина представлена как тип религиозной медицины, существующей как множество разновидностей конфессионального характера. Терапевтическую функцию здесь выполняет литургия ритуальных текстов, которые методологически определяет герменевтика. Исследуется когнитивно-семантическая система «мировоззрение – болезнь – терапевтическая процедура – излечение» как самоподдерживающаяся конструкция – «терапевтический круг», действие которого очевидно проявляется в психотерапевтических мероприятиях.

### Для цитирования в научных исследованиях

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### Ключевые слова

Мировоззрение, религиозная медицина, духовные ценности, пасторальная медицина, литургия, вербальное воздействие, символизм, лечебные методы, саморефлексия, терапевтический круг, неомировоззрение, традиция.

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